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PERCIVAL,

OR

NATURE VINDICATED:

A NOVEL.

By R. C. DALLAS, Esq.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

A man's nature runs either to herbs or weeds; therefore let him seasonably water the one, and destroy the other.

BACON.

THE SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

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PERCIVAL.

LETTER LVI.

MRS. BEVIL *to* JULIA.

An Effuſion of Maternal Joy. Different Situations in Society. Perſonal Reſemblances. Charles Percival.

MY DEAR GIRL,

I HAVE received your long letter, which deſerves double thanks for its being written before I anſwered the laſt, and thoſe again doubled for the length of it, and for the many intereſting points it contains. Your father and I have read your letters with a variety of ſenſations; but one delight never fails, the juſtneſs of our Julia's reaſoning and acting, her ſweet attentions to her parents, her piety,

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and her dependence upon her God. Be assured my love, that, "your help com-"eth of him who preserves them that "are true of heart;" and I trust your Edward's sister will also receive that help which is given to true-heartedness.

Your account of Stanley is very extraordinary; but after the proofs you have had, I cannot imagine what further doubt Towers can entertain. As for me I have none, because I have known menial servants to catch the manners of their masters to that perfection, that out of their places it would be difficult to distinguish them: not but that I am delighted with this young man's character in most respects. However, it is certain he has worn a livery: Sir Richard Brainless and General Tankerville both agreeing as to his name and description, makes it clear, and I admire

and

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and applaud Miſs Percival for her reſolution. Her obſervation is charming; it would have become the lips of one twice her age, and I have no doubt that her reaſon will prevail over the haſty prepoſſeſſion of her heart. The degradation that attends a woman who marries a man in the lower ſtations of life is not a prejudice, Julia; for though it is poſſible for one of the meaneſt condition to riſe in virtue and merit beyond many of thoſe who receive more honour from high birth than they reflect upon it, yet it ſo ſeldom happens, that the ſolitary exceptions make no alteration in the general nature of vulgar ſpirits; and it is very remarkable that nothing but humility can render even thoſe exceptions ſupportable. A man ſtepping from a mean condition, and proudly demanding the reward of his merits, is a very diſguſting object to reaſon. If Stanley

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were to aſpire to Caroline's hand, I ſhould deſpiſe as much as I now admire him; and were ſhe to liſten only to the ſuggeſtions of her fancy, her name, as ſhe juſtly ſays, would become the dread of her friends; and let me add, the butt of the world. But do not miſtake me, my dear Julia; I allude only to the nature of ſociety; for the Utopian ſyſtem that is now furniſhing ſome of the French orators with fine talk, muſt end in vapour, and gradations muſt ever exiſt; but as to virtue, God is no reſpecter of perſons; and I do not heſitate to ſay with Lord Powic, that I ſhould not have been ſorry if he had placed Stanley in the ſhoes of Lord Chopſtone, and diſpoſed of his Lordſhip among the logicians of the Convention.

Stanley's reſemblance to Lord Coteridge is extraordinary, yet there are inſtances of perſons being ſo alike as to be

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be taken for each other. A miſtake of this kind very lately occurred in this neighbourhood. The beautiful and amiable Fanny Dalſton, whom you have ſo often admired as a child, is ſoon to be married. The gentleman who is paying his addreſſes to her going to Mrs. Dalſton's, on his return from an excurſion, ſaw a youth in the parlour whom he abſolutely miſtook for Fanny, ſuppoſing it a joke of the family who introduced her as her brother. "You can't impoſe "upon me," ſaid he. Mrs. Dalſton told me it would have been eaſy to have continued the deception ſome time, had ſhe not felt an immediate repugnance to the idea of its being ſuppoſed that Fanny could appear before him in boy's cloaths. She ſeriouſly aſſured him it was her ſon who had come from Weſtminſter ſchool to ſpend his holidays with her, and his ſiſter entering at the ſame time

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convinced him. This, however, is a reſemblance of very near relations, and it muſt be owned it is ſtill more ſurpriſing where there is no family connexion, it being impoſſible that there can be any between Lord Coteridge and Stanley.

We pity poor Lord Powic: his error was not ſo unnatural as to deſerve the name of parricide. Deſpotic principles, ſtrong paſſions, and even parental affection in one point of view, guided him to oppoſe the wiſhes of his ſon, whoſe paſſions, on the other hand, it muſt be allowed, were ſo ungovernable as to render him forgetful or negligent of his father's peace of mind. The old Earl's grief and penitence have been too deep and durable, and have been ſuſtained by that romantic heat of imagination which ſuggeſted the ſtudied apparatus of gloom and horror you deſcribe in the account

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of your viſit to the black chamber. The effect produced by Stanley on the Earl was very natural, and I ſhould not be ſurpriſed if it led to the making of the young man's fortune. I hope he will merit it by his prudence. Although I agree with you in thinking that it is not your part to expoſe his condition, I think, and ſo does your father that he ought himſelf to make it known; the confeſſion would be a great feather in his cap, whereas an accidental or malicious diſcovery would prove his ruin We would have Towers hint this to him; and your father, who is anſwering Tower's letter, means to adviſe it.

I cannot expreſs to you, my dear Julia, what pain we have felt for Edward on account of his brother. Added to the information you have given us, we have had ſome ſad intelligence of Charles ſince his arrival at Cheltenham, from

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Mr. Forteſcue, who has juſt left the place, and who ſpent the day with us on Saturday laſt. Tempted by a run of good luck at hazard to ſtake largely, he finiſhed by loſing a very conſiderable ſum, for which he was under the neceſſity of offering his own notes, which were at firſt rejected, on his friend Sir Richard Brainleſs refuſing to indorſe them when applied to by the winners. Charles was at once angry at the application, which was unwarranted by him, and hurt at the refuſal. Not being able to give caſh, the fortunate gameſters with ſome inſolence took the notes, and he ſuddenly left Cheltenham without giving notice of his intention to Sir Richard, in whoſe company he went. A breach with the Baronet is a happy event; but how mortifying muſt it be to any man of ſpirit to ſtand expoſed to ſuch indignities! how dreadful to any one of principle,

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ciple, the reflection of ruin, brought on by such irrational propensities! Tell our dear Edward that we beseech him not to allow his brother's irregularities and misfortunes to oppress a heart so dear to us, the chearfulness and felicity of which he is under bonds to his Julia, to his darlings, and to his friends, to support. Ruin, and I fear only ruin, will awaken Charles from this sleep of his reason; but comfort Edward with the thought that when he does awake, he will have it in his power to lead him to rational happiness and to virtue. Adieu, my love! We look forward with delight to the time of your coming to the Lodge. Mr. Stanhope, from your account of him, will be a welcome visitor. Our loves to Caroline, and a thousand kisses to our dear little Edward and Julia.

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LETTER LVII.

SIR RICHARD BRAINLESS *to* JOHN STANHOPE, ESQ.

Charles Percival. Some of his Companions. The Friendſhip of Gamesters. A Conundrum.

DEAR STANNY,

CHARLEY Percival is off in a huff—damn it, he is in the wrong—I'll tell thee all how and about it. The day we left *the Methodists*, he was in the dumps all the morning. I never ſaw him ſo low before. We took a ſnap at Burford just to bait the horſes, but ſtill he was *down in the mouth*, and once after a long ſilence, he *damned the inventor of dice*; but on leaving Northleach, where we dined and ſtowed away *a couple of bottles*, he

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he began to revive, and afore we got to Cheltenham he was as hearty as ever, and *as merry as a grig*.

Here, beſides the lads I told you of, we met Arthur Bradley, Tim Goſling, and Benny Bigland, choice ſpirits all. We kept it up like hearties *for ſeveral days*, and Charley was the beſt company in the world. One night his winnings at hazard amounted to upwards of *four thouſand pounds*, but the very next night he loſt two, and the night after *five thouſand* more, by which he ſat down *three* minus. Damn it, I ſhall never forget how bluddy black he looked. He had not *the caſh*, and could not draw —damn'd awkward dilemma, Stanny— ſo he offered *his notes*— but the fellows with a ſneer, ſaid they'd rather have the caſh or drafts on a banker. The chief of the money was loſt to the two Huſtles, and that dirty fellow

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Barwick, with his powdered buſh-wig ſticking over his gander profile, who always backs them. Damn his muſtard-pot ſoul, what ſhould he take into his head to ſay but that he would take the notes *if Sir Richard would indorſe 'um.* There was a dead ſilence for a minute: but the pepper-hearted gooſe would not be ſo anſwered, and ſo coming up to me, he ſays, "Sir Richard, will you in-"dorſe your friend's notes?"—*Damned awkward thing for me,* wasn't it, Stanny? Says I, "Mr. Barwick, Sir, your wig's "a knowing one."—"Pſhaw!" cried Charley, and looked at me as if he could eat me *without ſalt:* then turning to the people, he told 'um he thought they had known him better than to have a doubt. "Oh! we have *no doubt,* Mr. Percival;" ſaid gander-face, "but you know"—"In ſhort," replied Charley, ſtopping the vinegar-mouthed ape, "there's no "help

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" help for it at preſent: you *muſt* take " the notes, becauſe the truth is, I can't " ſettle it otherwiſe for the moment, " but I will ſee that they ſhall remain " but a very little time in your hands, " ſo gentlemen, come along with me " into another room." Little gander-face could not help *caſting a ſheep's eye towards me.* " Won't you come too, " Sir Richard?" ſaid he. " I would " take Percival's notes for ten thouſand " pounds," ſays I; but ſays I, " its a " rule"—" *Rule!*" cried Charley, ſtopping me; " *rule! Damn rule!* its couſin-" german *to ſentiment:* Come, gentle-" men." And away he bounced, followed by gander-face and the Huſtles.

Next morning he ordered his horſes, and went off without ſaying a word to me or any of the party. Now, Stanny, this is very fooliſh of Charley, for I no more

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more meant to affront him than I do *to cut my own throat:* and its ungrateful into the bargain, for was'nt I ſcheming *to bring him into Parliament,* and didn't I intend to employ *all my intereſt* with my uncle Lord Dolt? and ſo I will ſtill, for I don't intend to let him quarrel with me, let him be ever ſo minded.

Did you hear my conundrum as we drove off from the Elms door? *Why is a good wheel like an orator's buckle?* Mind you anſwer this in your next. How is Mouſe, and how are the wimmen? Both fine creatures, but *Mamzell for me* in ſpite of your taſte. How much longer are you going to ſtay with them? and what are you about? Have you ſeen *my man George?* But you don't know him: he had left me *before you came to England.* It was a brave thing of his to fight *the mad bull.* I hope *the methodiſt* will

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will not only call *upon the Lord*, but upon *his purse*, to provide for him. Write before I leave Cheltenham, which will be in about a week.

Yours, &c.

RICHARD BRAINLESS.

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LETTER LVIII.

JOHN STANHOPE, ESQ. *to* SIR RICHARD BRAINLESS, BART.

Fashionable Friendship. Remark on Sir Richard's Style. Stanley. Julia and Caroline. The first insensible Movements of Seduction. Retreat and Hopes of a Seducer. Mrs. Stormont. Madame de St. Valeri. The Conundrum given up.

MY DEAR SIR RICHARD,

I AM more and more grieved for poor Charles, and am inclined, for his sake, to say Amen to his curse on the inventor of dice. I think, however, he has no right to be affronted with you: it is no breach of friendship not to indorse a friend's notes, and I know you love him, and

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and ſo do I, and we'll manage to bring him about, if he is not entirely done up; which, by the by, I am certain he is. His brother, into whoſe confidence I have made my way, ſays it is impoſſible to ſupply a gameſter; that he would ſhare his fortune with him as a brother diſtreſſed; but that a gameſter's wants are endleſs and would ruin twenty fortunes.

Let me tell you, Sir Dick, that you are improving in your literary ſtyle. Your epithets become more and more appoſite and ſtriking: muſtard-pot ſoul, pepper-hearted gooſe, vinegar-mouthed ape, are ſo delightfully expreſſive of a malicious, inflexible, money-getting imp, in ſhort, ſo deſcriptive of gander-face Barwick, that I wiſh from my ſoul your letter had been written to the late elegant Horatio, that it might have deſcended to poſterity in an unextinguiſhable blaze of literary fire.

Mouſe

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Mouſe and the ladies are well. We are at Woodville, where I received your letter. You muſt know I ſuſpect the family left the Elms on account of Stanley, who by the way has a very gentlemanlike appearance. They know he is not a perſon to be introduced, yet they are ſo ſcrupulous in their gratitude that they cannot bear the idea of giving him room to ſuſpect they would keep him at a diſtance. The matter would have been eaſily managed if he had been ſtill in his livery; but you are to know, Sir Dick, that George has ſtepped into a fortune by the death of an uncle, who was an exciſeman, and has already aſſumed all the airs of an independent gentleman: though, hang it, I do him injuſtice too, for he has really endeavoured to keep himſelf back, and ſaid as much as he could without exactly confeſſing that he had been a footman. On the

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the whole, Baronet, I think him a very extraordinary young man. He paſſed a day with us at Powic-Caſtle, being abſolutely compelled to it by the old Earl. His modeſty averted all diſguſt, and his good ſenſe pleaſed every body. It ſeems he bears a complete reſemblance to Lord Powic's ſon, Lord Coteridge, who was killed at Bunker's-Hill in America. The old man fainted on ſeeing him, and afterwards carried us to a moſt curious mourning chamber in which he bewails the loſs of his ſon, whoſe death ſits heavy on his conſcience: there the old man feeds his gloomy imagination by contemplating three pictures which are admirably well painted, and are relative to Lord Coteridge and his death. One is his portrait, and undoubtedly it bears a moſt ſtriking likeneſs to Stanley.

The day after this viſit, we left the Elms. I drove Mouſe, who is a delightful

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lightful creature, and I never had a more agreeable excurſion. Percival ſometimes rode on horſeback, and ſometimes in the coach with the ladies. A good part of the way I was favoured with the company of the one or the other of the ſiſters. Mrs. Percival was in high ſpirits, and had on a travelling dreſs, the most becoming thing I ever ſaw. Sir Richard, I never beheld ſo faſcinating a woman. The whole circle of mythological damſels afford me not an adequate compariſon for her, Venus and Helen perhaps excepted, who are worn out, and I ſcorn to name them with the Engliſh Julia. On the other hand, for Caroline, whoſe ſpirits indeed were very low, a hundred nymphs and goddesses preſent themſelves. Call her Hebe or Daphne, Proſerpine or Pallas, Leda or Atalanta, and you will do her no injury.

But

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But what ſignifies it to me that this Julia's form, features, and geſtures are thoſe of the miſtreſs of Adonis, when her tongue is Penelope's, and her heart Diana's. I know you love learning, Sir Dick, and ſo I treat you: but in plain Engliſh I never ſaw any thing ſo lovely as Percival's wife, and conſequently never was ſo in love before. On the road, having got rid of Towers, who was left at the Elms, I ventured a firſt ſlight advance beyond the progreſs of friendſhip. I talked of Petrarch and lamented his fate; I was inclined to accompany my lamentation with a ſigh, but I ſaw in her face an intelligence that put me upon my guard. A ſigh, Sir Dick, at that moment would have blown me up: the gentleſt I could have heaved would have proved a whirlwind to Maſter Cupid; ſo I put it up for a future day, and launched forth in the praiſe of the prudence

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prudence and conjugal fidelity of Laura.

This beauty, Brainleſs, is no prude; but ſhe is, what's a great deal worſe, in love with her huſband, and alſo with virtue. I ſhall quit the field as the winter comes on, for I am convinced there is too much force in array againſt me at preſent. Some lucky alteration may take place before the ſpring; her huſband may fall in love with another woman, or ſhe herſelf ſlide into a taſte for novelty; he may be engroſſed by the cares of humanity, or ſhe take a liking to champagne. In the mean time, while they bill and coo a little longer, I ſhall pay a viſit to the leſs rigid dame of Kent, and be with you in town by the meeting of parliament.

I have had letters from Oaks and Blake, who tell me they have ſeen Mrs. Stormont at Paris, where ſhe is flaunting with a Mr. Rumbold, who is ſufficiently

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ently attached to her, or rather to his own vanity, to be jealous of all the French levellers that ſpeak to her. They alſo mention a Madame de St. Valeri, and aſk me who ſhe is. They ſay ſhe is a beautiful young Engliſh woman who has been there ſome time, and generally attended by Lord Digby, who it is ſaid accompanied her and her huſband to Paris.

What can your conundrum be, Dicky? An orator has a tongue and ſo has a buckle, but I don't ſee what that has to do with a wheel. I have puzzled the Woodville party with it, and they give it up: the nave, the ſpokes, and the circle were all taken into conſideration, but in vain. Illuſtrate, illuſtrate, dear Baronet, and believe me

Ever yours,

JOHN STANHOPE.

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LETTER LIX.

SIR RICHARD BRAINLESS *to* J. STANHOPE, ESQ.

The Conundrum acknowledged to be a bad one. Mr. Timothy Gosling. Sir Richard admires Mr. Stanhope's learning. Encouragement for Seduction. Sir Richard tells a Story which fails in the Application.

DEAR STANNY,

I HAVE just time to tell you that I leave Cheltenham to-morrow, and that I spoiled *my conundrum*, if I said any thing about *a buckle* in it. It is bad enough as I meant it, for when I put it to Timmy Gosling—Why is an orator's tongue—it was the *damned tongue* I suppose that brought the *confounded buckle* into *my head* when I was writing to you

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you in a hurry—why is an orator's tongue, Timmy, like a good wheel? Quoth Timmy, "that won't do, Dicky, "*it breaks Priſcian's head.*"—"Breaks Priſcian's head!" ſays I; "what do you mean by that?"—"Why," ſays he, "*the orator's tongue* is, with the utmoſt "latitude, *well ſpoken*, but the wheel is "*well ſpoked.*" Upon which we both laughed as if it had been the wittieſt conundrum in the world. But when I aſked Tim how that broke Priſcian's head, he laughed and ſaid, *Oh! never you mind.* Tim Goſling is but *a bit of a numſkull*; that parcel of words whipt off his tongue without any meaning: the fellow often talks ſo. Now you, you Stanny, always know what you mean, and a nice clever letter haſt thou ſent me, full of learning. Venus, Helen, Hebe, Daphne, Proſerpine, Pallas, Leda, Atalanta, Adonis, Penelope, Diana, Petrarch,

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Cupid and Laura. There's your *mythologistical knowledge!* Oh! Stanny, Stanny, what would I give for such a memory as you have?

Odd woman this Mrs. Percival! depend upon it she'll come to *by and by*. She has had *only plain-sailing*, as a Jack Tar would say: a little *rough weather* between her and hubby will make a deal of odds. This sea-water metaphor brings to my mind what I heard a Jack say to a little sailor-boy who was pursued by an old woman, *his mother I suppose*, with a stick. They were running *down hill*; the beldam was coming up fast with the lad: "Helm's a lee, my hearty," says Jack, "*try the old B— upon a wind.*" The urchin took his advice, turned up the hill *and distanced the old one*. But what's this? Does not it go quite *the contrary* to what I was saying about you and Mrs. Percival? Well, all you can say

ſay is, Brainleſs was in a hurry, and no wonder *he did not conceive clearly* when the ſubject was *a woman: there's for you.*

Good bye—direct your next *to Cloud-cap Caſtle*, where I am going to drive Timmy Goſling in my curricle to ſee my uncle Lord Dolt.

Yours,

RICHARD BRAINLESS.

P. S. I ſhan't forget Charley's *feat in Parliament* at Cloud-cap Caſtle, notwithſtanding the ungracious fellow went off in a huff.

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LETTER LX.

PHILIP TOWERS *to* LORD DIGBY.

Stanhope. Gallantry, with a Word for the Fair Sex. Stanley. His unaccountable Behaviour. Caroline refuſes an Offer of Marriage.

Bevil Lodge.

MONTHS have elapſed, my dear Lord, ſince I heard from you. Your laſt was written in the beginning of autumn from Brighton, and now our undreſſed trees and ruby-hawed fences tell me that hoary headed winter has graſped the ſceptre of our hemiſphere. You have left me too in total darkneſs as to the hiſtory of your blue-eyed Beauty and her Gallic Lover. Since I knew of your being at Paris, I have had no doubt that your

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your letters to me have been intercepted and opened, though I have no apprehenſion as to mine, which I have heard from your houſe, have been conveyed to you by private hands. I have this moment received a few lines from our friend Major Balfour, informing me that he is upon the eve of an excurſion to the French metropolis, and I take the opportunity to ſend you a ſhort letter, to requeſt you will write to me by ſome more certain conveyance than the poſt is at preſent, and to remember that I have not received a ſingle ſyllable from you ſince you landed in France.

The laſt packet* I diſpatched to you was voluminous, containing a minute account of a day ſpent at Powic-Caſtle, in which Stanley made a fine figure, and

* Not inſerted, the ſubject of it being ſo fully detailed in Julia's letter to her mother.

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Chopſtone an odious one. Since that day my time has been agreeably paſſed, but attended with few incidents that call for detail; and as I am uncertain how ſoon Balfour may ſet out, I ſhall reſtrain the garrulity of my pen to a brief narrative.

Led by an inclination to dive more into Stanley's mind and hiſtory, I did not attend the Percivals to Woodville, but remained at the Elms, as did alſo Mr. Stockton, who is employed upon a very intereſting period of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory. The party were accompanied by Stanhope, who has rendered himſelf ſo amiable, that Edward and the whole family have formed an attachment to him. I almoſt hate myſelf, my Lord, for a ſuſpicion that entered my brain. I knew Stanhope to be a man of faſhion, and thought he had been too long fixed to one place to be without a view; nor

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was Caroline the magnet; yet he is so clever and so amiable that I deserve to be whipped for the thought, that had he dared he would have made love to Julia. Nay, I must be whipped for the next thought, which is, I almost wish he had. I wish gallants to understand the character of women: they usually attack vain creatures who have never formed principles, who consequently are easily seduced, and then forsooth, 'tis the nature of the sex,

And every woman is at heart a rake.

Oh! my Lord, my Lord, with what pleasure would I see every puppy cat-o'nine-tailed who twists his unmeaning lips and says, "women are light." The frailties of every idiotic Miss and Madam are blazoned in all the daily papers and periodical magazines, while the purity and domestic virtues of the generality

lity of the sex are confined to the knowledge of the limited circle of friends which they honour and adorn.

But to my narrative: Stanhope went with the Percivals to Woodville, and I remained with Stockton at the Elms. I had promised Bevil to visit the Lodge, but I retarded my journey full three weeks, during which time I was almost constantly with Stanley, whom the more I knew the more I loved and admired, but I could never arrive at a knowledge of his genealogy, over which he kept an impenetrable veil. His grand object was the improvement of his mind, and on reading with him I found him much more advanced in classical knowledge than I could have supposed. But his bent was chiefly to metaphysical enquiries: the mind and its faults, spirit, good and evil, the human soul, and immortality, seem to have roused his attention, which

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which he owned to me was checked and disappointed. "When I study a mathematical problem," said he, "my attention is rewarded, and I am satisfied "in what I wanted to know. When I "have read my Ferguson or Newton "for an hour, and made two or three "experiments, I find my understanding "enlarged; I have made myself master "of something: but when I endeavour "to grasp the loftier topics of thought, "when I strive to ascend from matter to "intellect, the points elude my powers, "I cannot fix my hold, conviction "wavers, I think according to the dictates of my heart, not as compelled "by demonstration. Yet after all," continued he, "I cannot, in the one case, "but compare myself to a child delighted in taking his toys to pieces, to find "the springs and wires: and in the "other, to a mariner, who looks for

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" land before he is well entered on his " voyage: as the evening cloſes his " fancy often reſts upon an airy land- " ſcape which the riſing ſun diſperſes, " yet land is really before him, which " he will certainly reach, if he carefully " attend to the helm of his bark." I diſcouraged metaphyſics for the preſent, and purſuing his own ſimile, I told him it was the mark of a raw ſeaman to be looking for land when he had hardly ſet ſail; that the buſineſs on the voyage was to attend to winds and courſes, currents and rocks, the nature of the veſſel, and the government of the helm; to ſing a ſong occaſionally, and to amuſe vacant hours. In ſhort, my Lord, I ſet him back to experiments, hiſtory, and poetry, and ſpent ſome very happy time with him.

In the firſt week we were two days at Powic-Caſtle, in the ſecond three

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days, in the third the Earl would have had us every day, but Stanley was too much in love with his books, his telescopes, and other instruments, to comply. He promised however, when I left him, to be more with the old man, and kept his word, as the enclosed letter, which I received about ten days ago, will shew, though the effect of it is not more lamented by Lord Powic than by me, for he is gone entirely from Cowper's; and I have neither heard from him nor can I trace him. The farmer, to whom I wrote, informs me that his things were directed to remain at a warehouse in London till called for. It is very remarkable that, although I wrote him an affectionate letter, he has never answered it: it is equally remarkable that he received no letters himself but mine while at the farm, and that he left no direction for any that might come.

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I have an apprehenſion reſpecting this young man that I pray to Heaven may prove unfounded. He has at times, at leaſt I have thought ſo, betrayed ſymptoms of an unſettled intellect. Notwithſtanding his general animation on ſeeing me, I have obſerved him ſink into a profound melancholy, from which he would burſt into ſome poetical rhapſody. From ſeveral incoherent ejaculations, I ſhould ſuppoſe General Tankerville had been his bittereſt enemy, which cannot be, from the letter I received from the General, and which I ſent you from the Elms. When I connect theſe obſervations with his confeſſion on the firſt day I ſaw him of a repining ſpirit, I fear, I fear, my Lord, that, be the cauſe what it may, all is not right in the machine. His unaccountable behaviour to Lord Powic by no means diminiſhes the weight of my

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my ſuſpicion. How wonderful is man!

A Beam ethereal, ſullied and abſorb'd!
An heir of glory! a frail child of duſt!

As I have no hope of this young man's writing to me, I have requeſted a tradeſman in town, who lives near the Inn where his things are directed to remain, to endeavour to procure me an addreſs by means of the perſon who may come for them. Whether my fear end in truth or not, I will not loſe him if I can help it, nor without trying every thing to ſooth and recover his mind; for let his condition in ſociety be what it may, he poſſeſſes a ſpirit that will grace a higher ſphere than this world can offer.

The Percivals are come to Bevil-Lodge, and the Bevils are to return with them to ſpend the holidays at the Elms, where

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where I ſhall alſo paſs my Chriſtmas. I muſt not forget to tell you, that while they were at Woodville, Chopſtone went over and paſſed a week with them, during which he ſolicited the hand of Caroline, and was refuſed by her. As for Stanhope, he determined to ſhame my penetration, and though preſſed to Bevil-Lodge by all parties, excuſed himſelf, and took his leave at Woodville, ſome time before the family quitted it. Of Charles Percival I have, alas! bad tidings to give you, my Lord. He loſt a large ſum at Cheltenham, and not having caſh or credit with his banker, gave his notes: not being able to acquit them he diſappeared. The holders applied to Edward, who took them up on condition of their being anſwerable to him for the ſums, if they divulge the tranſaction. Both reaſon and delicacy at preſent preſs this conduct on Edward,

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of whom every day gives me freſh proof that my early opinion was founded on a juſt obſervation of his nature and education. Adieu! my dear Lord, conſider your arrears and diſcharge them ſpeedily.

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LETTER LXI.

EARL POWIC *to* PHILIP TOWERS.

(Enclosed in the preceding.)

Stanley's inexplicable Conduct at Powic-Castle.

Powic-Castle.

DEAR SIR,

A CIRCUMSTANCE has happened which gives me more pain than I can express to you. On your leaving the Elms, Mr. Stanley according to his promise indulged me with frequent visits, and after some time I flattered myself that I had rendered my house agreeable to his taste. He passed whole days and nights at the Castle, delighted with the permission I gave

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gave him of doing as he pleaſed in my library. Dear Mr. Towers, I enjoyed a happineſs in looking at him and talking with him, which, till our memorable meeting here, I could not have ſuppoſed it in the power of my whole fortune to purchaſe. He too ſeemed happy in general, though I have ſurprized him at times in fits of reverie and dejection: when I thought him ſtudious, a ſigh and a tear betrayed him. I endeavoured to gain his confidence without ſucceſs; he never would mention his family to me. The moſt he ever ſaid to me on that ſubject was, that his father having little deſire for knowledge himſelf, had cruelly neglected his education. I offered to procure him every aſſiſtance he could wiſh, which he declined, though not haughtily, ſaying, that his imagination was too apt to carry him beyond his pretenſions, but that in his ſober reflections he

he thought his time would be beſt beſtowed in attaining agricultural knowledge.

Laſt week going unexpectedly into the little cabinet adjoining the library which I had formerly furniſhed with ſubjects of natural hiſtory for Lord Coteridge, I caught Stanley in tears over a picture which he held in his hand, but which was ſuſpended to his neck by a ribbon that allowed him to take it out of his boſom. He wiped his eyes and ſaid, "My Lord, "this is not fair." I aſſured him on my honour that it was accidental, and at the ſame time beſought him not to deny me the comfort of conſoling him. I aſked him if love were the cauſe of his wretchedneſs, and if the portrait he wept over were the picture of his miſtreſs? He turned it to me, and deſired me to look at it. I never ſaw a lovelier face: I told him I did not wonder at his paſſion, for that the charms of the very picture had

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had given a glow even to my old heart. "Let me," I said, "who acted so "wretched a part to my own son, take "this occasion to promote your genuine "effusions: let me remove whatever "obstacles lie between you and the ob- "ject of your affection; my purse, my "influence, my friends, shall be used "to make you happy: there is no diffi- "culty I will not conquer, unless in- "deed it be a relentless, revengeful fa- "ther." I could not help weeping, dear Mr. Towers, at the recollection of my own cruelty, and Stanley's agitation was redoubled. He kissed the picture, put it into his bosom, rose, pressed my hand, said his gratitude was unspeakable, but entreated me to say no more upon a subject which he assured me was hopeless. I was under the necessity of yielding, and we rode out together; but a gloom hung upon our countenances the whole morning.

We

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We dined alone: after dinner our conversation had unusual intervals of silence, one of which I unluckily put an end to, by an allusion to the picture in his bosom: "You are thoughtful Stanley," I said; "don't be angry with me, my dear "boy, for observing what infinite misery "has been produced by Beauty." His answer was; "And you may add, my "Lord, by Virtue; for if you allude to "the woman whose picture I wear, both "were in her as near perfection as hu-"man nature can attain."—"*Were!* "Stanley;" I said, "are then your feel-"ings excited by one whose frailty has "driven you from her?"—"Frailty!" he replied, "yes, if new sufferings and un-"arguing resignation, added to virtue, "make it frailty: no, my Lord, of the "two it is her beauty that has suffered; "that indeed has yielded something to "the corroding tooth of sorrow."—

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"The dear girl!" I anſwered, "how "you intereſt me for her! will you in- "dulge me with another ſight of her "picture?"—"Willingly, my Lord, on "condition that you aſk me no queſtions "about her." I told him I would not attempt to force his confidence, but wait till time ſhould prove me worthy of it. The ring of the ſetting was ſo fixed as to enable him to diſengage the picture without taking off the ribbon: he put it into my hand, and I again admired a face which it was impoſſible to look at without admiration. The head was ſimple and unadorned; it had not even a bandeau of any kind, but the hair fell round the face in natural ringlets: the eyes were animated, but the ſmile that was on her lips was divine; the boſom and ſhoulders were modeſtly veiled in a fancy muſlin robe, and the whole of the figure was bewitching. After ſaying how captivating

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tivating I thought it, I added, I had seen a lady whom it resembled. "Perhaps "so, my Lord," he said; "though I "believe you are unacquainted with "her who sat for this; but I have been "told it bears a considerable likeness to "the Lady of General Tankerville; "you may have seen her." I told him I had not, but still I retained in my imagination traces of a face like the one before me. He assured me that he had the strongest conviction of my never having seen the person for whom the picture was done, whose story was a melancholy one, but which it was impossible for him to talk of. He then put up the picture as before, and silence again ensued. For something to say, I observed that the Lady whom he had mentioned was much older than the portrait, and had no pretensions to a resemblance of the virtues he had extolled.

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"I underſtood, my Lord," he ſaid, "that you were unacquainted with Mrs. "Tankerville." I anſwered; "I am "never in the world as you ſee, nor have "I mixed with it for many years. I "once ſaw a Captain Tankerville, who "I believe is the preſent General, but "to his wife I am a perfect ſtranger; "I don't even know who ſhe was, but "my nephew ſometimes talks of her "levity." As I ſaid this Stanley ſtared at me, I thought with anger. "Does "Lord Chopſtone know her then?" he ſaid, "I believe not," I replied; "for the General is ſo jealous of her "that he has confined her for years at a "diſtant ſeat, and is himſelf ſo moroſe that "his former companions have dropped "him." The anger I had perceived now broke forth: Stanley bit his lips, and ſaid warmly; "Lord Powic, I deſpiſe a "puppy that reports a report." Although

though my reſpect for Lord Chopſtone is far from being what I wiſh it could be, I own I was a little nettled that Stanley, ſpeaking to me, ſhould uſe ſo offenſive an expreſſion in alluding to my nephew. I therefore put him in mind that he ſpoke of my neareſt relation.—"And is your "neareſt relation, my Lord——" ſaid he—I ſtopped him, for I ſaw an accountable rage in his countenance, which I dreaded would prompt ſome language that it would not have become me to ſubmit to—"Stay, Sir," I ſaid, "reflect "before you ſpeak."—I got up, but he, inſtead of riſing, placed his elbow on the table and ſupported his head with his hand, which covered his eyes. "Stanley," I ſaid, "I ſhall return to coffee; let us "take it together with good humour." He made no anſwer, and I left the room. When I went back, he was calm but grave. After our coffee he told me he

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was conſcious that he had given me reaſon to be diſpleaſed, by ſuffering a general impulſe of indignation to betray him into a rude expreſſion; he ſaid he could not recover himſelf till he had been alone for a day or two, and that he ſhould therefore go to the farm for a few days. This I at firſt oppoſed; but as he perſiſted, not only with politeneſs but affectionately, I ordered the carriage, into which his trunk was placed, and we parted very good friends. My laſt words to him were, if I did not ſee him in three days I ſhould diſpatch a ſpecial meſſenger for him. I did on the fourth ſend to enquire what was become of him; and gueſs my ſurpriſe, dear Sir, on hearing that he had left the country and ordered his things to be ſent after him.

You who are ſo well acquainted with the nature of the heart, will eaſily forgive the weakneſs of mine; I confeſs to you that his departure was a pang to it, and

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that his abſence preys upon it. I hoped Providence had thrown this youth in my way in mercy to an expiation of twenty years. I would ſacrifice half my fortune to detain him with me, nor can I account for the abruptneſs of his leaving the neighbourhood; for how can what paſſed as to Mrs. Tankerville affect him? and in reſpect to his harſh term of Chopſtone, he knows I was not ſeriouſly offended with it: he knows that his opinion and mine are not very wide. I beſeech you, dear Mr. Towers, to give me ſome account of this ſingular creature, and pardon the loquacity of a fond old man, who is with the higheſt eſteem,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful humble ſervant,

POWIC.

A poſtſcript written on the envelope of the preceding letter to Lord Digby by Mr. Towers.

P. S. On a reperuſal of Lord Powic's

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letter, which I beg you will take care of for me, I am perſuaded that there is ſomething more in the connexion of this young man with the Tankervilles than has come to our knowledge, but I am too well acquainted with his principles to have any ſuſpicion of his honour. The reports, however, reſpecting Mrs. Tankerville are not new, either to you or me, and it is well known that her ſecluſion from the world has been owing to her huſband's jealouſy. I forget who ſhe was. After Chriſtmas the Percivals will go to town, and either Edward or I will explore Tankerville's ſolitude in Derbyſhire, for the purpoſe of ſettling our doubts. Poor Lord Powic! I hope his expiation has been accepted at the throne of grace. Adieu!

PHILIP TOWERS.

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LETTER LXII.

MADAME DE ST. VALERI *to* PERCIVAL.

An old Acquaintance with a new Name.

Paris.

FORGIVE me, my dear friend, for having ſuffered you to remain ſo long a ſtranger to my fate. Want of confidence in myſelf, not in you, has occaſioned my ſilence. In vain I wiſhed to take refuge in your friendſhip, I felt myſelf undeſerving. I will explain my conduct and my proceedings to you when you have enabled me to aſcertain that you ſtill think of me with kindneſs, and that my letters will not be treated with diſdain; for indeed you have juſt cauſe to ſuſpect the ſtrength

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and ſincerity of my attachment to you. My conduct has been unaccountable and unjuſtifiable, yet I hope every thing from your goodneſs. If you ſtill have any affection for me, be aſſured that you are to me dearer than ever; if on the contrary I am ſunk in your eſteem, the brighteſt ray of my life is darkened and ſtruck from my exiſtence. In the preſent ſtate of this country it is very doubtful whether this letter will meet you; if you do receive it, in pity anſwer it immediately: I will then write you a long account of myſelf, meanwhile know, if you know it not already, that I am MARRIED, that I am no longer Emma Coverley, but St. Valeri's wife, yet ever

Unalterably your friend,

EMMA DE ST. VALERI.

P. S. I have greater hopes than I had

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of this letter finding its way to you, as Lord Digby has procured it a conveyance by a private hand. Direct to me à Madame, Madame de St. Valeri, à ſon Hotel, ſur les Boulevards à Paris.

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LETTER LXIII.

LORD DIGBY *to* PHILIP TOWERS.

A Promiſe to ſupply the loſs of intercepted Letters. The Imprudence of St. Valeri.

DEAR TOWERS,

I DEPLORE the loſs of my letters, as my time is fully occupied here, and I can hardly hope to give you ſo detailed an account of events as I wrote at the periods of their occurring; but as it is impoſſible to recover them, and as I know I have excited an intereſt in you reſpecting the Brighton Beauty, I will endeavour to recall my enthuſiaſm, and tax Morpheus. At preſent however I can do little more than make the promiſe,

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as I have but juſt heard of Monſieur de Rochefort's intended departure for England in the courſe of the day, but you may expect to hear fully from me by the firſt ſafe opportunity that preſents itſelf. Meanwhile know, though I need not tell you, that Miſs Coverley is Madame de St. Valeri.

Her huſband has a good hotel here pleaſantly ſituated on the grands Boulevards, but he does not himſelf improve on acquaintance: he has a ſhowy countenance and perſon, which attract at firſt, but at laſt one diſcovers that he is not much indebted to nature for brains, and that he talks by rote. Conſidering the ſituation of this unhappy country, for I now ſee it is a devoted one, he ſpeaks on politics with the greateſt imprudence. I have plainly told him that I think it dangerous. The King is ſhortly to be tried, he and the royal family are in priſon, and

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their adherents are sufficiently unsafe without wantonly courting destruction. I shall persuade St. Valeri to return to England with his wife, or to send her at least before the confusion I foresee. The letters I wrote to you contained an account of the events that have been taking place here, which I shall not repeat; you will hear the facts, and we will discuss them when we meet. I have received all your packets; a thousand and a thousand thanks for their interesting contents, which is all the acknowledgment I can at present make. Adieu!

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LETTER LXIV.

LORD DIGBY *to* PHILIP TOWERS.

A prudent Guardian. Lady Duberley. The Purity of the Coverleys. That of the celebrated Sir Roger de Coverley cited. A Marriage. A Trip to the Continent. A Halt at Vaucluſe. Petrarch, bubbling Water, Rocks, and Laura. The newly married Lady's thoughts of Edward Percival. Education not to be contraſted with Nature. Corilla. Paris. Mrs. Stormont.

DEAR TOWERS,

AFTER the ſketch I gave you of Emma Coverley at Brighton, you could not be much ſurpriſed at her marriage with St. Valeri. Determined to have him ſhe was, and as I thought there was leſs riſk of

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of deſtruction in humouring the reins of authority than in provoking her to ſnap them ſhort, which ſhe would eaſily have done, I went to town and made it my buſineſs to ſee my friend Sir William Oldham.

Oldham is a reaſonable man, and was not much aſtoniſhed at the reſolution of his ward: he is however cautious, and took a little time to conſider what was beſt to be done. He was not unacquainted with the diſpoſition and ſpirit of the girl whom his old friend Craven Coverley had bequeathed to him, and he had no doubt of the iſſue that would attend his oppoſing her wiſhes. He came to me the morning after I called upon him, and ſaid that he found himſelf in a very awkward predicament, that he was very well ſatisfied with the reaſoning that occurred to him for conſenting to Miſs Coverley's marrying; but he was very

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ſure that neither the world in general nor the Chancellor would admit it. And what was to be done with Lady Duberley? ſhe would never liſten to it; and would make a fine noiſe on the buſineſs. I acknowledged the difficulty of his ſituation, and that he ſtood between two evils; the only thing was to aſcertain which was the leſs, and chuſe it. Her going off ſhould be prevented if poſſible; St. Valeri was an alien; how was her property ſettled? Moſt of it in ſtrict ſettlement: that which was not would be in danger: her huſband would be puniſhed by the Court of Chancery, but would always be conſidered as her huſband: much trouble would enſue. "If "it were poſſible," ſaid Oldham, "to "reconcile Lady Duberley, I think the "marriage might take place quietly, and "paſs unnoticed till ſhe were of age: "but Lady Duberley—ſhe lives with

"Lady

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"Lady Duberley—odd's my life, a "thought ſtrikes me," continued he, "With the higheſt rage for parade and "faſhion, the old woman is the greateſt "prude exiſting: would it be too inde- "licate to your friend to alarm her aunt "on the ſcore of character? no body "need know it but ourſelves; my life "for it, ſhe would be for patching up a "wedding inſtantly, and I ſhould have "her ſoliciting inſtead of oppoſing my "conſent." I knew Miſs Coverley's opinions too well to fear ſhe would be very much hurt at this artifice, and I agreed to Sir William's attempting this mode of bringing her Ladyſhip over.

In the courſe of the day I ſaw Miſs Coverley, and told her that her guardian propoſed to conſult Lady Duberley. "He may juſt as well go and conſult "the tigreſs in the Tower," ſaid ſhe; "the old cat would ſcrew up her mouth "thus." And ſhe liſped her aunt off to

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to the life. "Gad so! Craven Cover-
"ley's daughter marry a French hop-o-
"my thumb! my niece, whom British
"peers are sighing for, sink into a *Ma-*
"*dame!* If he had been one of the
"Princes indeed! but a Chevalier!
"which every body knows is nobody.
"If I thought the girl was low-minded
"enough to think of such a match, I
"should, Sir William Oldham, insist
"upon your using the rigour of your
"authority, given to you by law, ac-
"cording to the will of my dear bro-
"ther, and send the girl where she should
"never again see the face of a French-
"man, or that of a commoner of any
"country. Ask her, do ask her, if I
"married a commoner? By the by, my
"Lord," continued she, resuming her
own melodious tones, "did you ever
"see the noble peer to whom she gave
"her hand and fortune? though I beg
"your pardon for the question, as I have
"heard

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" heard he was dropping into the grave
" with age at the time of the marriage,
" and in leſs than nine months after left
" her a widow, though in vanity ſhe has
" all the ſtarchneſs and prudery of an
" old maid; and perhaps no wonder."

Having joined her in the laugh at her aunt's expence, I ſeized the word prudery to hint Sir William's thought. She conceived it before I had well uttered an obſcure alluſion to it, and said, after another loud laugh, that it was a happy one. " Alarm her, I beſeech you, " for the family honour, and ſpare no " term of raſhneſs that will complete her " conviction of the danger it is in."— Again the mad-cap laughed. I wiſh, Towers, I had never known her, for I ſaw at that moment, and alas! I ſee ſtill, that the pleaſure of her friendſhip muſt be followed by the ſorrow of ſeeing her loſt. I have dared to curb her, and ſhe liſtens to my advice with the affection

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of a daughter: but she is soon off again into ridicule, which she levels against the restraints of what she calls unnatural customs. What a shame is it that such beauty and talents were early suffered to take a wrong bias! what a pity that this girl should be even now destitute of that guidance which only an amiable, sensible, and experienced woman can bestow! Had she a mother, or any other female relation, who would be at the pains of gaining her confidence and watching over her, I should hope to see her yet shine honourably in the brilliant circles of our country, and pass her youth respected and beloved. As for St. Valeri's relations:—but I am anticipating, and will only add to my digression, that I am anxious to save her, and that I will make the best use I can of the esteem and affection she expresses for me, to prevent her proving a star that falls to rise no more.

Sir

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Sir William having undertaken to make an attack on Lady Duberley in the weak quarter, called upon her Ladyſhip in a few days, and gravely opened the buſineſs to her; ſaying that he had been adviſed by a prudent and ſagacious friend not to oppoſe a marriage, but to uſe expedition in concluding it, for reaſons of the utmoſt importance to the young lady's reputation: adding, "But, Madam, "what am I to do? the world will con- "ſider me as guardian of her perſon "and fortune, not of her fame." Her Ladyſhip gave vent to a hurricane of rage, and after exhauſting her ſtock of epithets on beggars, low people, and abject young women who could throw themſelves away to gratify their beaſtly paſſions and whims, ſhe told Oldham that a taint on the name of Coverley would be death to her, that the purity of the family had been proverbial for ages,

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ages, and that the delicacy and chaſtity of her great grand-uncle the celebrated Sir Roger, had been the theme of one of the fineſt writers of this country. She then ſhowed him a friendly anonymous letter that ſhe had juſt received herſelf, which made her tremble for the blood of the Coverleys. Comparing this letter with the advice given to him, ſhe thought it was written by ſome ſenſible and kind friend who did not wiſh to take an oſtenſible part in the information, and ſhe concluded by aſſuring him that ſhe thought the firſt and moſt eſſential duty of a guardian to a female ward was to preſerve her reputation unſullied, by every means in his power. I ſuſpected Miſs Coverley to be herſelf the author of the friendly epiſtle, which ſhe did not deny. Oldham ſuffered himſelf to be gradually led by her aunt to make up the match, on condition of the married couple

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couple living in a private manner till the Lady was of age, and thus without any eclat was effected what, when I firſt thought of Lady Duberley, I believed would be attended with much difficulty and noiſe.

Sir William convinced Mr. Sanderſon that it was the beſt conduct they could purſue as truſtees to take care of the property, and the ſettlements being completed and adjuſted to their approbation, a licence was procured, the ceremony was privately performed, and Oldham himſelf gave Emma away. Lady Duberley did not conceal her diſapprobation to either bride or bridegroom, but vouchſafed to be preſent in conſideration of future reflections. Sir William behaved nobly in ſeeing them provided with a conſiderable ſum immediately, aſſuring them that ſupplies ſhould be punctually made, and the eſtates properly attended to and delivered into their poſſeſſion

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poſſeſſion on Madame de St. Valeri's coming of age. Meanwhile it was thought by all who were privy to the marriage that a trip to the continent would be the beſt mode of paſſing the time; and as St. Valeri wiſhed to preſent his bride to his ſiſters who were ſtill in Paris, ſhe, who was fond of French manners, agreed to the plan with rapture. On being warmly preſſed by both of them to paſs the autumn in their company, and having alſo a deſire of being a ſpectator of ſome of the ſcenes performing on the grand Gallic theatre, I readily conſented, and we ſet out from London the week after the marriage without their making any public appearance.

Before we were half way to Paris, Madame de St. Valeri, in whom volatility is characteriſtic, propoſed that we ſhould for the preſent only ſtay a day or two at Paris, juſt that ſhe might make a curteſy to Madame de Rallon and Roſe de

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de St. Valeri her new ſiſters, and then take a flight to the ſhores of Italy, the deſcriptions of which had excited her enthuſiaſm. I made no objection, and ſhe executed her ſcheme notwithſtanding a little oppoſition at firſt from St. Valeri, who wiſhed to make ſome previous arrangements. "Oh!" cried ſhe, "let us "enjoy this delightful autumn, you will "have time enough by and by for ar-"rangements." Alas! dear Towers, it has proved a ſad and gloomy autumn to France; but when we arrived at Paris, though the ſpirits of its inhabitants were in a ſtorm, their ſky was clear; and the little Roſe de St. Valeri being invited, and being alſo as anxious to fly about the world as her ſiſter-in-law, urged us to take wing for that enchanting country, which not to have ſeen was a blot upon the taſte of all who could afford it. In ſhort we were literally but three days in Paris. Having ſecured proper paſſ-

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ports and letters, that as little interruption as poſſible might be given to our journey, we ſet off in good ſpirits in a carriage hired for the purpoſe, and adapted to the roads, which I found much worſe than when we travelled them together, Philip, and in ſome places dangerous.

I do not mean to keep you long on this tour with us; with every part of the ſcenery of it you are acquainted, and it was attended with few incidents worthy recital. Indeed I do not think I ſhould have brought you into our journey at all, but for two points that require the mention of place in the narrative. Having got ſafe in our carriage to Lyons, we ſtopped a couple of days merely to gratify our eyes; for, carry this with you, our rapid movements were intended for little more than viſual indulgence: though indeed at Florence both Madame de St. Valeri and Roſe, there *Signora Roſa*, which appellation ſhe has ſince retained,

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tained, were extremely assiduous in perfecting themselves in the language, in observing the manners, and in gaining a knowledge of the country, as well as in viewing the grand gallery and other museums that have immortalized the taste and spirit of the Medici. But I must go far back from Florence, to relate the first point that tempted me to make you of the party.

At the desire of Madame de St. Valeri we went down the Rhone. I need not tell you that the sisters were astonished and delighted at the sublime appearance of the Pont St. Esprit. I felt the same veneration for it myself that I did twenty years ago, although not the same surprise. Of course we rested at Avignon to visit Vaucluse.—"What a place!" cried the sprightly Emma. "I am quite disap-"pointed: rocks and a little bubbling "water! I expected that the air would "electrify me with love: I never had any "great

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" great opinion of the force of Platoniſm,
" and now I am convinced that it is all
" ſtuff, and only fit to make ſonnets of.
" Had we clambered to the barren rock
" in the Pays de Vaud, where indeed
" love, real love, enflamed the heart,
" and fed the ardent imagination of a
" St. Preux, each ſtep we took we ſhould
" have felt the animating fire pervading
" every nerve; we ſhould have ſhared
" the rapturous emotions of the lover of
" Eloiſe: but here—mais ici—ton cœur
" ne bat plus vite, St. Valeri? Voyons;
" que je le touche—ah!—plus tranquille
" encore que le mien!—Le malheureux
" Pétrarque!" St. Valeri, whoſe intellect and deficiency of common information are already become the jeſt of his wife, and who did not very well comprehend that ſhe could be ſeriouſly laughing at a love that had for ages ſo delighted and aſtoniſhed the world, began a piteous ſpeech, as I preſume moſt viſitors of the fountain

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fountain do, in compaſſion to the memory of the tender and unfortunate frequenter of it.—" Laiſſe là ta pitié, mon " ami," ſaid his wife, " il ne la meritoit " pas."—" Cela eſt vrais," replied he, " car il faut avouer qu'il avoit le tort " d'aimer la femme d'un autre."—" Eſ- " tu ſot, St. Valeri?" ſaid ſhe, " Le " tort! eh! ce n'eſt pas cela: c'eſt qu'il " aimoit la pauvre Laure comme il aimoit " ces rochers, pour faire des vers; elle " n'etoit que ſa muſe.—Crois-tu, s'il " avoit été vraiment amoureux, non " comme il ſe peint dans ſes vieux ſonnets, " mais amoureux comme etoit le ſen- " ſible St. Preux, qu'il auroit paſſé dès " années ſans tenter une ſeule impru- " dence? Non, non, Petrarque ſavoit " très-bien qu'on devient, quoiqu'en di- " ſent les maris, amoureux de la femme " d'un autre; c'eſt tout ſimple; mais il " ſe connoiſſoit mal en amour, il n'en

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" parloit que pour rimer, et il ne mérite " pas d'être plaint pour n'avoir eu que " ce ſuccès: il ne viſoit qu' à cela."

As this ſally, which you are by no means to underſtand as the offspring of mere ſprightlineſs, but the candid production of a lively imagination and ardent feelings, will diſcover to you more of the character of St. Valeri's wife than any laboured attempt to draw it, I have brought you to Vaucluſe to hear it. She talks of love as if ſhe felt it. Avowedly and apparently her huſband is not the object of it: ſhe *fancied* the man, as ſhe ſays. If I could pitch upon any one as having touched her heart as well as her fancy, it would be PERCIVAL; yes, your Percival, of whom ſhe talks with extreme enthuſiaſm. " He has," ſays ſhe, " a bewitching form and countenance, " that would infallibly make every " woman fall in love with him, if it were " not

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" not for the unnatural and pedantic " ſentiments he profeſſes; and yet," continues ſhe, " when they come from " his lips, they ſound ſo unaffectedly mo- " ral, that one forgets nature to be vir- " tuous too."—" Too faſt, too faſt, my " fair friend," ſay I; " are virtue and " nature oppoſites?"—" Did I ſay ſo?" cries ſhe laughing; " no, no, I muſt not " ſay ſo. In Percival I am ſure they " are not: they ſeem ſo united, that if " they do not abſolutely ſpring from the " ſame roots, the one has been very " early engrafted on the other. But " then engrafting your Lordſhip will " allow is uſing art with nature." She often hits off a thought in this manner and then flies from it, ſo that it is difficult to make her attend to a ſerious anſwer, though I am ſometimes ſo *pedantic*, as I tell her, as to return and attack her metaphors days after ſhe has ſuppoſed them

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victorious. You may be ſure I did not leave her to imagine that I was ſatisfied with a diſtinction being left between the dictates of nature and the effects of education. I convinced her that education was itſelf in fact a dictate of nature, and that its beſt uſe was the formation of good habits. She contended, however, that habit had nothing to do with love; that, although the intellect might be taught to moralize, the heart was above control. I inſtanced Percival, knowing it would have weight with her. "Even "Percival," ſaid ſhe, "is no exception: "he does not control his heart; it is "faſcinated by his wife's beautiful eyes "and pouting under lip. If ſome lucky "chance ſhould but poke out thoſe, or "tear off this, and leave teeth and gums "to produce an amorous atrophy, like "poor Miſs Vandercom, whoſe paucity "of the feature, as a celebrated author "would ſay, obliges her to exert the "labial

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" labial muſcles in order to puſtle a " covering round from every ſide, which " after all requires the aſſiſtance of " the tip of her tongue to fill the re- " maining aperture, my life for it his " beſt morals would not confine his heart " to Julia. But," continued ſhe, " I " will allow one ſurpriſing thing, which " is, that he is not either cloyed with a " wife to whom he has been married I " believe more than three years, or " moved by the charms of novelty."— Theſe are libertine ideas, my dear Towers, and I fear proceed from a libertine heart. I am ſorry for it, and I will counteract them if I can.

Now let me carry you by the Mediterranean to Florence, and introduce you to the wonderful *Corilla*. There are many *Improviſatores* in Italy, but ſhe is acknowledged by the Italians to be the moſt remarkable. We paid her a viſit

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in company with Mr. Bonin of Geneva, his lady and daughter. Bonin, who teaches natural philoſophy, was to explain a phenomenon, and ſhe, without any previous notice of the ſubject, to *improviſe* upon it. The ſubject he choſe was *Thunder*, one very well ſuited to poetry, and capable of being put in a proper light for that purpoſe. He pitched, however, on the more obſcure parts, and explained them in a very bungling manner. From this circumſtance, and his ſpeaking Italian very ill, the *Corilla* had much difficulty to underſtand him. As ſoon, however, as ſhe made out his meaning, ſhe called a muſician and made him play an heir to her liking; following that, ſhe ſung moſt pleaſantly, and with the moſt ſuitable action, ſome hundred verſes, in which ſhe not only verſified the account ſhe had heard, but introduced many poetical images, interſperſed with compli-

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compliments on the philoſopher's acuteneſs, and excuſes for her want of ability to pleaſe him and his amiable lady. All this ſhe ſung in a ſhort rhiming metre. She then ordered another air to be played in a different ſtyle, and ſung again on the ſame ſubject, not only in a different meaſure, which the Italians call *ottava rima*, ſomething like Spencer's verſes, but with different thoughts and expreſſions. After this, M. Bonin's daughter, an amiable infant, repeated a French fable, in which the nightingale and ſparrow court the ſame female, each relating his qualifications, the nightingale promiſing to entertain her with muſic, and the ſparrow to careſs her. *Corilla* was delighted with the fable, and the child's manner of telling it, and ordered a third air to be played, in which ſhe ſung the ſame ſtory in elegant Italian verſes, and ended with compliments and

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excuſes to the company, and many pretty things addreſſed to the child. During theſe extempore ſongs her countenance and geſtures, ſo ſuited to her conceits, were moſt animating, and not only make me believe what Horace ſays of his Improviſatores to be literally true, but enliven my faith in the ſtories of the old bards and prophets. How the verſes would appear on paper, it is hard to ſay. They are in general ſpoken ſo faſt that they cannot be taken down in writing, and ſhe cannot repeat them except when the fit is on her, which is rarely but in company. If Amphion and Orpheus had left their verſes behind, they would probably have loſt much of the effect they had when accompanied by action and ſong. Had I lived in the days of Sappho and ſeen her at Leſbos, I ſcarcely think I ſhould have been ſo well pleaſed. Sappho was ugly, but *Corilla*, though

now

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now growing old, and therefore seeing people chiefly by candle-light, has the remains of a fine face and neck, and the marks of so much feeling, and, what is still more uncommon here, good nature in her countenance, as would entitle her to make conquests without her abilities. The surprize and admiration of Madame de St. Valeri and Rosa here, surpassed all they had expressed at the sight of the Pont St. Esprit, and they have talked of nothing so much since our return as of *Corilla.*

Madame de St. Valeri wished to remain longer at Florence, and it was not till her husband, who had serious affairs in Paris, spoke peremptorily, that she yielded. "A pretty slavery indeed!" cried she. It was, thank Heaven! during our absence that the horrid events that took place in the prisons of this capital happened: I turn from the thought with

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horror. This city is ſtill in a convulſed ſtate. Every Frenchman attached to royalty generally, or to the King perſonally, is in imminent danger of his life. I think St. Valeri by no means ſafe: he is watched I am confident. To the Engliſh a ſuperabundant civility is ſhown, and I am ſorry to ſay that there are numbers who appear to deſerve ſuch civility. But I have written you a long letter, and fear to broach political topics; I will only ſay that the Convention are determined to try the King, and I believe to murder him in form. Since the retreat of the Duke of Brunſwick they think themſelves ſafe, and there is no enormity to which their raſhneſs will not lead.

Among the Engliſh here, how will you be ſhocked to be told that Mrs. Stormont is conſpicuous in her folly. She is at preſent living with a man of the

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the name of Rumbold. She has acquired an impenetrable ſhield of braſs, and is become as noiſy and vulgar as ſhe was always ſilly. She is in the direct and ſteep deſcent of infamy. Her friend is an overgrown, coarſe fellow, with a good purſe, who has gained acquaintance by dint of attending race-grounds and gaming-tables. This pair are received at ſome of the chief democratic houſes, and the lady has the aſſurance to give herſelf airs, becauſe Lord Digby thinks proper to decline viſiting her. In the moſt delicate manner I could, I made Madame de St. Valeri obſerve the diſgrace and horror of the wretched woman's ſituation. Her anſwer was: "Diſgraceful and horrid indeed! How "different from the life of a Ninon!" By the by, Madame de St. Valeri I find is in correſpondence with Percival: let Julia look to it.

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I have perused your letters with the greatest pleasure, and at times with great pain; I mean as to the latter, where they treat of Charles Percival, for whom I have felt much kind prepossession: but so it is, that cursed itch for gambling never fails to ruin the mind it invades, let its original structure have been ever so noble. Your last, informing me that he had disappeared and that nobody could tell what had become of him, gave me an idea that he might be here, but I have enquired in vain. Your accounts of Stanley and Triton, of Giles, and Dame Aikins, Lord Powic, old William, and the black chamber, have interested me beyond expression. As for Stanley, my comprehension is not equal to his history, as you give it. No man who had been merely a footman could correspond with your description. You know my bias, Philip, to prefer talents

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and virtue, individually, to rank and fortune, and therefore will not charge me with a harſh and inconſiderate cenſure. No condition precludes a man from acting a worthy and honourable part; but be aſſured that that elevation of ſpirit which appears in Stanley, that dignified modeſty, that amiable preſumption in Lord Powic's preſence againſt the reporter of ſlander, are no marks of a faſhionable domeſtic. Had he been accuſtomed to ſervice and acquieſcence, and at the ſame time ſeized with a deſire of puſhing himſelf forward, a tale of ſlander was not a fit motive to produce a paſſionate reprobation of the Earl's nephew. Every thing you have ſaid to me of this young man himſelf is a ſtrong indication of ſome miſtake relative to his condition, and yet I own the external circumſtances are very ſtrong, and in ſome degree excuſe the certainty you

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you have all admitted of his having been the footman of Brainleſs. His reſemblance to Lord Coteridge is extraordinary, but not without example. I hope you will find him again before I return to England, I long to ſee him, and will do my utmoſt to ſerve him if he ſhould want it; though, indeed, it is clear he cannot want a friend while Lord Powic lives. I remember Lord Coteridge a fine, handſome, ſenſible, lively fellow. I had very little the ſtart of him in life, but he diſappeared all of a ſudden, and I afterwards heard that he fell in America. I return you Lord Powic's letter: poor old man! I pity him. Why will not men look forward into their lives beyond the preſent moment, and prevent thoſe miſeries which, could they be ſeen, would ſurely not be choſen! Adieu!

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LETTER LXV.

PERCIVAL *to* MADAME DE ST. VALERI.

Some Ground for Congratulation. Place endeared to us by Youth and by Love.

I REJOICE to find you again, my friend, for to that title the ſhort letter I have juſt received from you confirms my right. How can you for a moment doubt the continuation of my kindneſs? Talk no more I beſeech you of aſcertaining it, but let it be at once aſcertained for ever. My attachment to you is that of the pureſt friendſhip, and will continue through life. Your attention delights

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lights me, and I will not ſuppoſe you to have committed an error, when your conduct may be productive of happineſs. The ſudden interruption of your correſpondence, and the length of your ſilence, made me anxious about you, but you were by no means ſo unaccountable as to prevent my foreſeeing your plan.

Though unacquainted with M. de St. Valeri, I hope I may congratulate you. May your promiſed communication be ſuch as to give the proſpect of a laſting happineſs, and my heart and pen ſhall overflow with congratulation. Your marriage was conducted with ſuch privacy, that it has not been talked of at all; but I have heard, through the means of a confidential friend, that it was known to your guardians; this is a happy circumſtance, on which I may congratulate you. May it eſtabliſh in your mind

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mind thoſe principles of prudence which will ſecure you reſpect and eſteem as well as love. Oh! let me ſay again that matrimony affords the moſt fertile ſoil of felicity. Cultivate it I beſeech you, that I may have the joy of ſeeing my friend bleſt.

One thing makes me uneaſy for you; the complexion of the times in Monſieur de St. Valeri's country; the ſtate of France. The encreaſed emigration proves to me the inſecurity of any perſon attached to the royal cauſe. I wiſh both you and your huſband were in England: do not think any property abroad worth the riſk of ſtaying; your eſtates are ample funds for every thing you can deſire: perſuade M. de St. Valeri of this, and not to loiter too long on quick-ſands. I own the King's ſituation muſt be intereſting, horribly intereſting, but it is

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an intereſt that pervades every quarter of the globe, and I believe few boſoms in Paris have more lively feelings on the ſubject than it excites in thoſe of England.

We are at preſent at Bevil-Lodge, the little paradiſe where firſt I ſaw my Julia. I always look at theſe ſcenes with renewed and increaſed delight: the banks of the Avon, the lawn, the octagon temple where I firſt told her that I loved her, and which we have ever ſince called the Temple of Love, are magnetic attractions to my imagination; and I am gratified beyond meaſure in carrying my little boy and girl over theſe favourite ſpots, ſo dear to the remembrance of their father. Oh! waſte not your precious hours, my friends; haſten from confuſion to the tranquil ſhades of happy England, and fix at once on an abode, that you may conſecrate a local habitation

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ation to early love, which your memory may hereafter gild with charms beyond the power of the moſt enchanting place to beſtow. Lovers know not what they loſe when the ſcenes of their early effuſions are at a diſtance which they cannot reviſit frequently. At Bevil-Lodge I always experience the union of the pleaſures of imagination with thoſe of the reality of the ſurrounding objects. Where would theſe delights have been had we been ſhut up in an Hotel at Paris, or a houſe in London, when we exchanged our hearts? I do not ſay we ſhould have loved leſs, or that our emotions at the time would not have been equally grateful to us; I talk of after-time, and a different emotion; of a feather from the wing of love, not of love himſelf. As I think I cannot urge a more alluring motive for your return, for I am ſure France will afford no ſuch ſcenes at preſent, I

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will only add my hope of ſoon receiving your promiſed account, and an aſſurance that I am as much intereſted in the welfare of Madame de St. Valeri as I was in that of Miſs Coverley.

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LETTER LXVI.

MADAME DE ST. VALERI *to* PERCIVAL.

A haſty Marriage. Corilla. Conflicts of the Heart. Dependence. A Caſtle in the Air overturned. St. Valeri's Family. Paris. Repining.

How infinitely has my mind been gratified by the new aſſurances of affection from the pen of Percival! Moſt truly do I thank him for his kind ſympathy in my fate. Can I be otherwiſe than delighted when I poſſeſs the eſteem of ſuch a heart as his! It will ever be a ſource of joy to me in the bright portions of my exiſtence, and of conſolation in the cloudy hours I foreſee. My dear friend, I have

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I have a long ſtory to tell you of a fermenting mind; but I muſt content myſelf at firſt with giving you an account of my marriage-flight.

You ſay you foreſaw my plan. Were I diſpoſed to be enigmatical, I would ſay you would not have done ſo had you ſeen into my mind; for you would perhaps have diſcovered there what would have made almoſt any other romantic girl reſolve not to marry as I did. There was a kind of inexplicable battle-royal at my heart, fought by liberty, love, fancy, and Percival's advice.

I was at the ſame time peſtered by a knot of perſonages whom I either hated or deſpiſed, when fancy ſhielding herſelf with your ſentiments, gained an advantage to which I yielded, and throwing myſelf upon the amiable and philoſophic Lord Digby for friendly aſſiſtance, I managed, without much difficulty, to become,

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come, what you exalt ſo high, a wife. To deſcribe to you the malignant rage, ſcrewed up features, and liſping accents of my moſt amiable aunt, would be loſs of time, and not altogether to your taſte, which has ſo often warned me againſt mimickry and ridicule: but you will perhaps be ſurprized at the eaſe with which Sir William Oldham conſented to the marriage. All I can tell you is, that on a conſultation, firſt with Lord Digby and then with my aunt, they had both the pardonable aſſurance to think it was the beſt thing I could do. It was, however, thought proper that my affairs, which are all ſettled to the liking of Sir William, ſhould remain as they were till I ſhould come of age, to which St. Valeri, who in the main is a good-natured fellow, agreed.

Lord Digby, whom the more I know the more I reſpect and love, was prevailed

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prevailed upon to make an excurſion with us to the continent. We flew on the wings, I will not ſay of love, but of pleaſure, entirely acroſs France, and pitched for about ſix weeks in Florence. At Paris we did little more than bait, juſt to take up St. Valeri's younger ſiſter Roſa, and to make my curteſy to the elder ſiſter Madame de Rallon. I was delighted with every thing I ſaw, every thing I heard, every thing I did. I ſaw nothing, however, of all that touriſts ſee and publiſh, that I ſo much admire as the Florentine Corilla; an elegant and ſenſible woman, who in the moſt graceful and expreſſive manner compoſes extempore verſes on any ſubject, and ſings them divinely. I wrote among my minutes an account of an evening we paſſed in company with this extraordinary being, which I will one day ſhew you, and I ſhall only at preſent obſerve of her, that

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ſhe has been a very handſome woman, and ſtill retains a great portion of beauty, that her abilities are very ſuperior, that ſhe has a huſband, but has long given up *the form of ſeeing him*, that ſhe has never ſcrupled to pleaſe her fancy with lovers, and that after ſpending a very delightful life, ſhe talks as ſoberly on moral and religious points as any married woman, though ſtill the object of love, and living with a Marquis of her own country.

I ſhould have liked much to paſs the winter at Florence; for though I was fond of the *gaieté de cœur* of the French while I was formerly a girl among them, in Italy I found every thing novel and beautiful: in ſhort, I was captivated, and before I would quit it had two quarrels with St. Valeri, one in private, very ſerious; and another before Lord Digby, with ſome attention to good manners. I ſaw that I was born for continual

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mortifications, and that an even flow of happineſs was never to be my lot. But let me not ſo ſoon wound you with my complaints: I will imbibe your leſſons, Percival. You are ever in my thoughts. I read your letters again and again; they have been productive of more pleaſing ſenſations than I can deſcribe, and I cannot ſay how exquiſitely happy it makes me to reflect that I have a place in the affection of a ſoul like yours. Still, ſtill I feel the horror of dependence. Were St. Valeri an angel, did he poſſeſs every quality which can endear one perſon to another, the idea of my depending in any degree upon him would make me miſerable. If poſſible let your friendly pen lull my faculties to ſubmiſſion, though I freely confeſs to you I have little hope even in the influence of that. The delirium of Fancy is now almoſt cooled: ſhe has loſt her magic,

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and old Reaſon begins to open his eyes. Inſtead of riding on the wings of zephyrs, liſtening to the chaunts of angels, and drinking the nectar of Gods, we muſt return to our original cold exiſtence, view with diſappointed eyes our mortality, and acknowledge in humility our weakneſs, miſery, and *dependence*. Conceive my ſenſations when I reflect that by a *ſingle* act I have forfeited all the flattering hopes which once in imagination made the joy of my life. My freedom is gone, and what can compenſate for the loſs of it? not all the riches of the earth. Percival, I had imaged a plan to concentrate all the ſprings of happineſs. I had raiſed an enchanted caſtle in which it was my intention to have collected whatever could gratify the mind or charm the ſenſes. Science and pleaſure, learning and gaiety, the lectures of philoſophy and the ſounds of muſic,

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were to conſpire to my bliſs, and the rational and the frivolous were to be admitted to entertain the intellect and amuſe the fancy. I ſhould have formed one of the moſt perfect ſyſtems of human felicity that ever occurred to the mind of man or woman. Three months ago this bleſſed proſpect lay before me—alas! how changed to the moſt mortifying picture! I ſee myſelf a ſlave, and nothing awaits me but miſery or death. Is it not a curſe, my friend, to be born with ſuch ſtrong feelings? Sometimes I muſt own they are productive of ſuperior delight, but too often they are the ſource of intolerable pangs.

St. Valeri is eſteemed, at leaſt, a good-natured creature. So he is in general, but our diſcordant ſpirits have already claſhed: he has even checked my ſentiments ſince our return to Paris, and appeals to his ſiſters againſt the boldneſs of

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of my opinions. Theſe he knew before; I kept no ſecret from him: but thus it is, the laws have given him the right of a huſband. Madame de Rallon and Roſa de St. Valeri are indeed more reaſonable than their brother, and have a pleaſure in hearing my notions, when we are by ourſelves: not ſo *Monſieur le mari* of Madame de Rallon, whom I every now and then catch peeping aſkew at me, and one day he told me, half laughing half ſeriouſly, that I was little more than one of the faſhionable democrates who were operating a revolution in matrimony. I ſee the French women are far more tolerable than the men. Madame de Rallon, than whom I believe there is not a more ſtrictly virtuous woman even among the prudes of England, is full of life, and is no enemy to building caſtles on a Spaniſh foundation, that is in the air; but ſhe has certain limited notions

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which are not to be eradicated when they have been early ſown in the mind.

Monſieur de Rallon has for ſome time paſt been very prudently remitting funds to England in a private manner. St. Valeri very imprudently talks of his intentions to do ſo himſelf, and forgets, not only that he may be overheard by ſome who are not his friends, but that he has no funds to remit. If he could ſell his eſtate at Oſtroville, which lies in the neighbourhood of Provins in Champagne, at no great diſtance from Paris, for a fair value, he might ſave from the wreck of his fortune about five thouſand pounds ſterling; but a ſale at preſent is out of the queſtion. He rather wiſhes in his heart that he could think of clearing off the incumbrances; and ſo do I: but Lord Digby ſays, and indeed his own relations ſay, it would be madneſs at preſent, to which he involuntarily aſ-

ſents,

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ſents, and then it is he talks of taking up more money upon it to remit. It is a very pretty place; nor do I wonder at his wiſhing to ſave it; and if France were what it was when I formerly delighted in it, Oſtroville ſhould be in no danger of paſſing from the St. Valeris; but ſad and deep is the change: Paris is not the ſame place, nor can the vivacity of my little Roſa, or the indulgent manners of St. Valeri's elder ſiſter, remove the gloom and ſtupidity of the ſcene, not to ſay the horror, as you obſerve, attendant on the intereſt inſpired by the ſituation of the royal family.

Although I appear with forced ſpirits, I am often melancholy, and wiſh myſelf again in England, ſince I am *not allowed* to be at Florence. Not allowed! oh! Percival, I am unhappy to a degree that I cannot expreſs. When the thought croſſes me, and it croſſes me but too

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often, life is a burden to me. Your letters upon the female character made me reſolve on marriage: my dear friend, adviſe me now; I want advice; tell me to break my fetters, and ſeek happineſs after my own ideas; or will you ſay that I muſt calmly ſubmit to glide away my portion of exiſtence in apathy or diſguſt? If ſo, inſtruct me, as I have already beſought you in this letter, how I am to do it. You have, I will own it, a powerful aſſiſtant in Lord Digby, who condeſcends to amuſe my fantaſies, as they are called, while he reaſons in favour of the prejudices of the world; but all he ſays, and all you have ſaid on the ſame points vaniſh when I feel myſelf, in ſpite of thoſe rational principles, ſubſtantially wretched. Why am I formed differently from the reſt of my ſpecies? why do I not ſee as they do, think as they do, feel as they do? then ſhould I act as they do.

Percival,

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Percival, is the concluſion of your letter in nature? it is the ſtyle of a lover, not of a huſband who has been married for years. Oh happy infatuation! but there is no infatuation for me. I have no Avon banks, no lawn, no octagon-temple of love, to ſooth my imagination. I have no feather from the wing of Love, for Love himſelf diſdained to ſmile upon my nuptials.—The word is blotted—it was a tear that dropped upon it; I cannot help it, my eyes are full of them. I will go to Madame de Rallon to dry them; I love her dearly, and if I am obliged to ſubmit, I feel ſhe will be a great conſolation to me. Write ſoon.

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LETTER LXVII.

PERCIVAL *to* MADAME DE ST. VALERI.

Fanciful Views of Life end in Diſappointment. Ardour a Bleſſing, but there is Happineſs without Rapture. The genuine Medicine of the Soul. Some Notions reſpecting the Separation of a Wife from her Huſband.

YOUR letter as it relates to our friendſhip was productive of infinite pleaſure to me, but as it relates to your own happineſs, I am grieved to find that it does not call into congratulation that warmth from my heart which you poſſeſs there. I do not ſay this with the ſmalleſt intention of derogating from Monſieur de St. Valeri, for being unacquainted with him

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him I can have formed no judgment of my own reſpecting him, and anxious for your happineſs I am the more inclined to ſee him in a favorable light; but I ſay it from being more and more confirmed in the judgment I have formed of *your own* character. Alas! you are viewing life through a romantic glaſs; a priſm that throws delightful colours on the objects we look at, and which flatters the viſion with fairy pictures. When the glaſs is removed, as removed it muſt be, enthuſiaſm is diſappointed, and we quarrel with Nature for being different from what we wiſh her.

It is no curſe to be born with ſtrong feelings but according to the direction they take. That ardour which buoys the ſoul in ecſtacies on the current of life is the happy lot of very few: ſo far as I have ſailed on the ſtream it has been mine. In love, in friendſhip, in the va-

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rious occurrences of life, it has ſmoothed the waters about me. It is no delirium, it is conſonant to Reaſon, and goes hand in hand with her: when it fails Reaſon may open her eyes, but it will be to ſee her loſs. To deſcend, however, from flights in which the ſoul is rapt, there is ſurely a medium between a life of rapture and cold exiſtence which is no trivial ſource of happineſs. Kind attentions mutually kept up will always endear even indifferent perſons to each other, and will not the very names of huſband and wife lead to thoſe attentions, to thoſe endearments? the flame of love once raiſed will burn long if fanned by both the votaries, but will inevitably expire if left only to the care of one. Were you juſtifiable in oppoſing St. Valeri's return to Paris? I only wonder how he conſented to go beyond it at ſuch a criſis, though his conſent was fortunate; and it was ſurely natural that he ſhould be anxi-

ous

ous to return. With reſpect to your opinions, if a friend is uneaſy about them, what muſt a huſband be? If, as I fear, your mind and imagination are thirſting for an unattainable felicity, I muſt recur to my old doctrines: compoſe a happineſs you cannot find; fortify yourſelf as much as poſſible againſt external attacks; generalize your ideas; read, look into the regions of the univerſe, caſt your eyes on this ball of earth as on a ſpeck; and expand your ſoul through the creation, then will little diſagreeable objects become inviſible, and your preſent torments be unfelt. Look forward for real bliſs, and raiſe a preſent happineſs in the hope of ſecuring it for the future. Be aſſured you are not ſingular: the philoſophy I preach may be hard to follow, but it is real philoſophy, the only ſure recourſe of the underſtanding. All other advice is empirical, and may cure

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or kill by chance; but to ſeek the will of Heaven, and act as nearly as poſſible in conformity with it, is the only genuine medicine of the human ſoul.

I cannot adviſe you to break your fetters, but I would endeavour to make them ſit eaſier. To break them in order to purſue the alluring viſions of your imagination, muſt be attended with the total loſs of all that is moſt deſirable in life, and with a ſad diſappointment in the ideas you have formed: ideas which, romantic as they are, I do not diſcourage you from attempting hereafter, in union with St. Valeri; but which, if even with ſuch union they can be realized, never can be accompliſhed if you begin with contemptuouſly daſhing down the moral ſtructures of ſociety. Although I do not adviſe you to break your fetters, neither would I have your life paſs away in apathy and diſguſt. Should theſe indeed

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deed take place, ſhould the living with your huſband be attended with miſery, it is hard for a friend to adviſe a continuation of it: but if you have the ſmalleſt opinion of my underſtanding, if my ſentiments have any weight in guiding you, you will never commence a ſeparation by an abrupt departure from your huſband, or with a breach of thoſe rules which the moral ſyſtem has laid down for your ſex. If hereafter a ſeparation ſhould be abſolutely neceſſary for your peace, urge it calmly and with dignity to your huſband, and let it take place by mutual conſent; and ſurely no man would wiſh to continue living with a woman whom he cannot make happy, and who ſeriouſly deſires a ſeparation. But I will not conceal from you, and I expect an additional glow of affection for this bold proof of ſincerity, that I am fully perſuaded if ever it ſhould come to that, you would be totally a loſt being.

I firmly

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I firmly believe that, far from being happier in such a separation, farther disappointments and universal condemnation would, on the contrary, bring down more affliction upon your head than you can possibly now endure, however intense you may think it. What a dangerous and stormy period of existence are you passing through! Gladly would I show you which way to shape your course and how to manage the helm. The chief business of life is to cultivate and improve our faculties and virtues. Charming and sensible as you are, consider your youth, and whether this culture of your mind and soul is not to be continued: set yourself seriously about it, beginning with fortitude, and you will soon forget apathy and disgust.

It gives me infinite satisfaction to hear that Lord Digby is with you. I know no man on whose assistance in the efforts of

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of reaſon I would ſooner depend; he unites ability and virtue, firmneſs and pleaſantry: give him your ear my friend, and open your heart to his counſels. I like your account too of Madame de Rallon: as she attends to you, it is but juſt you ſhould attend to her. I am perſuaded ſhe is a charming woman, and her friendſhip will be of great importance to you. As for the Corilla, had you kept her to the ſphere of her attraction, I ſhould have joined you in admiring her. Her talent is wonderful; my friend Towers has read me Lord Digby's account of her: but in her life, at leaſt what you ſtate of it, ſo far from ſeeing any thing delightful, it is only wonderful to me how any woman can ſo ſear her mind as to have a peaceful moment while ſhe leads a life of libertiniſm. The concluſion of your letter was painful; your doubt of my happineſs being natural, and the

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the tear that dropped on the word *nuptials*, ſhow that you have miſtaken nature, and that the ſpirit that repines within you is leſs licentious than you yourſelf imagine. Come, come, exert your ſtrength of ſoul, and let me ſee my friend all I wiſh her.—Deſerve to be happy by commanding the eſteem of the virtuous, and I will anſwer for your yet allowing yourſelf to be among the happieſt of women.

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LETTER LXVIII.

MADAME DE ST. VALERI *to* PERCIVAL.

Unſettled Notions of Happineſs. Murmurs, and a Plan of Liberty in embryo. Change in St. Valeri. Diſguſt. A Viſionary. Contraſt of Minds.

COULD you, Percival, diſcard a little of your moral pedantry, you would be the firſt of men; but that you are as it is; you would, let me ſay, be more than man, the pride of Nature. But I excuſe you, for I know the noble deſigns you have in view; I am acquainted with the benevolence of your ſpirit.

You connect the words *medium* and *happineſs*; you forget your former deſcription

ſcription of the huſband neceſſary for me, and you tell me that if I will but deſerve to be happy, you will anſwer for my being among the happieſt of women. Alas! happineſs will never ſmile on me. My friend; at this diſtance let me ſay, my beloved friend, I affirm that there are pleaſures which perhaps but few minds can feel, pleaſures that ariſe from a mixture of ſenſibility and virtue with *independence*, for the loſs of which not the whole ſtock of the vulgar enjoyments of life can compenſate. Will you not underſtand me? My ſoul is burſting with the idea, and is unable to give it appropriate language. Perhaps it is to be found in this paſſage of an inimitable painter of the feelings:

The high born ſoul
Diſdains to reſt her heaven-aſpiring wing
Beneath its native quarry—
Not in the fading echoes of renown,

Power'

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Power's ample robes, or Pleaſure's flow'ry lap,
The ſoul ſhall find enjoyment.—Nature's cares
The obedient heart far otherwiſe incline—
Witneſs the ſprightly joy when aught unknown
Strikes the quick ſenſe, and wakes each active power
To briſker meaſures—witneſs the neglect
Of all familiar proſpects though beheld
With tranſport once, &c.

No, I cannot make it coherent; the laſt five lines come neareſt. Forgive me, I am half mad: do not be too ſevere on my underſtanding, of which I am anxious you ſhould have a good opinion, while at times I give you reaſon to doubt the ſolidity of it.

You adviſe me to read, to ſtudy the works of God, to expand my mind. I thank you, Percival; here you are on my ſide. Although it might be ſuppoſed that the uſual pleaſures of youth would dazzle me, I could make the purſuit of this advice the chief enjoyment of my

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life; but can a young woman carry her reſearches very far, unaided by the kind hand of wiſdom and experience? Impoſſible. A great degree of encouragement is neceſſary, and *I* have *no* help. On the contrary, with the ſingle exception of Lord Digby, I have been conſtantly ridiculed on all ſides for ſuch prepoſterous notions: even Madame de Rallon laughs at me. Is not this then a real ſource of miſery to me? and the more ſo, as it is become impoſſible for me to remove it, without forfeiting that fame which you value ſo highly, and which your friendſhip and admonitions have raiſed in me ſome deſire to preſerve. You muſt feel that the ſympathy of two minds nearly allied by ſimilar purſuits is of all others the intercourſe moſt rational as well as moſt ſoothing: and now never am I to hope to enjoy it. I have a good houſe, a fine-toned

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piano, a painted book-case, delicacies on my table, and wife apes to eat them: I receive the attentions paid to A WIFE, and I have all the comforts, that is, the usual parade of life; yet the grand object is wanting, and I am ungratified. Is this ingratitude for the blessing of abundance? Oh no! Had I a head as clear as yours, I would convince you that what has the appearance of ingratitude, is nothing more than a warm, enthusiastic desire to taste more genuine bliss, and to attain more perfection than is in common the lot of sublunary beings.

I began this letter with an intention of trusting it to the post, but being promised an opportunity by a private hand in the course of the next week, I shall keep it open and add my thoughts from time to time as they occur.

* * * * * * * * *

I have

I have been reading your letters again. I know not how it is that they affect my heart in ſpite of their oppoſition to my underſtanding, but I always read them with new delight, and with more pleaſure than I receive from any thing elſe. Your conſtant advice throughout our correſpondence has been reſignation, and a curb upon the impulſes of imagination. This I have ſtruggled to accompliſh becauſe you adviſed it, but I confeſs that at times I feel the ſtruggle is in vain. Repeated wounds will rouſe the mind to action. It is now four months ſince to be virtuous I diſcontinued to be free. I riveted my fetters that Percival might not ceaſe to eſteem me: but I do not, I cannot charge him with the error of my own precipitancy. No, though he is now the advocate of St. Valeri, I forget not the beacons he placed in my paſſage. I have this moment read theſe words:

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words:—"Be cautious in the diſpoſal "of your hand. It reqnires all the "wiſdom and all the acuteneſs you are "miſtreſs of to diſtinguiſh between the "lover of yourſelf and the lover of "your fortune." I do not accuſe you, Percival! you have uniformly acted like a friend and a man of honour: but I am miſerable, and reſolution and reaſon are exhauſted. I muſt, I muſt throw off the incumbrances that bear down my ſoul. I am wavering upon the mode of extricating myſelf: help me, help me, I beſeech you. I hear your anſwer:—"Submit to your lot."—Hear mine: I have endeavoured, wiſhed, prayed to model my mind according to your advice; but Percival you are in oppoſition to Nature, which will be obeyed.

* * * * * * * * *

St. Valeri has kept his word with me as to dice; he is no longer a gambler:

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but as to happineſs, he is perhaps changed for the worſe; he is become a ſaunterer, yawner, and a weariſome creature. His gaiety is exhauſted, or cruſhed by the affairs of France! the remarks that uſed to pleaſe me tire by repetition even more than taciturnity. He is now eſteemed a man of excellent character; that is, not having a degree of intellect which requires *conviction*, he ſubmits to be guided by the *rules* that have been ſet for the multitude. Propriety is ever in his mouth. Paſſions in women he conceives to be a kind of madneſs, and the calm ſucceſſion of daily duties is, in his idea, the extent of their rights. Are not theſe opinions intolerable inſults to a warm, animated diſpoſition, an enterprizing head, and an enthuſiaſtic heart? He thinks my ardour folly; I think his coldneſs inſenſibility. Mutually diſguſted at each other's principles, how can hu-

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man fortitude ſupport the ſituation? In the improvement of my faculties he will not encourage me, and cannot aſſiſt.

You have no doubt, thought that I have been ſpending my whole time in gaiety. Think ſo no longer. Ever ſince our return from Italy, our ſpirits have been daily ſinking, and all the chearfulneſs of the houſe is brought to it by our viſitors. Except during the hours beſtowed upon me by Lord Digby, in which we are by no means left to ourſelves, and a few in which Madame de Rallon, whom I ſtill love, comes to *badiner* with me, for Roſe has been taken away leſt I ſuppoſe ſhe ſhould be corrupted by me, I retire to my ſolitary Boudoir, and read and dream of happineſs which I never am to know. Were it not for a ſenſe of religion, and dread of eternity, I ſhould, on throwing down my book, or waking from my viſion, take a ſpeedy

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method of eſcaping from the wretched ſenſations which the contraſt leaves upon my ſickening heart. It is no little aggravation of my wretchedneſs that people think me happy, becauſe forſooth St. Valeri is no libertine, and becauſe we poſſeſs affluence, which I believe is the grand object of happineſs with the nine-tenths of mankind: but in your mind it is compoſed of other materials; materials you will candidly confeſs not uſed in building for me.

* * * * * * *

You do not diſcourage an attempt at my romantic ſcheme hereafter, provided it be with St. Valeri, without whom you think it is not to be accompliſhed: if ſo, adieu to hope! but no, I will not bid it farewell yet; the thought would diſtract me. I cannot ſupport a negative exiſtence, equally unaffected by pleaſure or by

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by pain. Inactivity is insupportable, and my mind without new objects becomes dull and inanimate: I must fall into stupor not to sink into despair. I am tired of mere breathing and walking about, and listening to insipidities, and I wish myself dead a hundred times a day. The wish, however, does not proceed from a disgust to life: never was I more warm and enthusiastic than at this moment, but I cannot exert my powers, and my bosom is oppressed with ineffectual struggles. If you had ever experienced this sensation you would know how to pity me, and you would not tell me to be happy because others are; for happiness adapts itself to the abode where it is to dwell. I have seen beings who would think themselves blest in the possession of the very things that constitute my misery. We cannot account for this strange and opposite formation of

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ſculs, but we are certain it does exiſt, and therefore, my friend, it would be folly to reproach me with an eccentricity of character which ſprings from nature, and which all the ſyſtematic rules of pedants cannot alter. I appeal to your excellent underſtanding to ſay whether an active mind can be happy in inactivity: is it not a glaring abſurdity? The gratifications I image to myſelf, muſt, if I continue bound to St. Valeri, be forever given up: and is it then unnatural to wiſh to purſue a path in which I may enjoy them? Surely the wiſh is reaſonable; but then, ſay you, the means to realize it are encompaſſed with difficulties and dangers. What! quit your home, your huſband, your ſtation? Forſake every reality, to fly to an unknown or imaginary fate, of which the miſery would be irretrievable? to ſet out upon the wide ocean of the world, and to be ſubjected

to

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to the inſults of villains? Theſe are the remonſtrances I hear, or think I hear, perpetually reſounding in my ears. Yet after weighing all, after bringing to my mind the perſpective of futurity, I feel diſpoſed, ſhall I ſay reſolved, rather to try my fortune upon the boundleſs field of chance, than to ſubmit to the ſervile, degrading terms which exiſtence now offers me. There are inſolences my proud ſpirit cannot brook; inſolences that may be ſeen and felt, but cannot be deſcribed. I am, in ſhort, dependent on a man for every pleaſure or comfort in life; one who can afford me few himſelf, yet has it in his power to withdraw all. The happy flights of an ardent mind are checked. I plod on a wearieſome exiſtence, expoſed to the low ridicule of little minds, and am to be ſubſervient to the caprices of a ſuperior, for ſuch the laws conſider him, of one

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whom I aſtoniſh by a thirſt for knowledge, and who diſguſts me by ignorance; to whom my enthuſiaſm ſeems madneſs, and whoſe mediocrity and indifference are to me ſtupidity; one who is methodical, a ſtranger to ambition, and regardleſs of novelty; while my feelings are all alive, and my wiſhes perpetually occupied with ſchemes of pleaſure or improvement. Thus mutually wondering at, and diſguſted with each other, our hours are paſſed in reproaches and unavailing regrets. Is it poſſible that two ſuch extremes can go through life together? After ſo ſerious an expoſition of my mind and feelings, I ſhould not be ſurpriſed if you were to aſk me, "Why did you then voluntarily, and "againſt the warning you received, throw "yourſelf into his arms?" Percival, I will not tell you; at leaſt not now: ſuffice

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fice it that the deſire of continuing your friendſhip combined with a powerful impulſe of fancy to make me his wife. But, oh! how do I regret the day in which I was ſo weak, ſo fooliſh, ſo delirious, ſo mad, as formally, to ſanction a tyranny over my perſon which the laws render permanent!

* * * * * * *

When you have gone through this letter, will you ſtill be ſo cruel as to alarm me on the ſcore of fame? Will you again tell me that I ſhall be a loſt being? What care I for fame! I want happineſs. Why will my ſcheme be impracticable? I ſhall not throw down all virtue though I leave a huſband. But I will have a little patience, for it is probable I ſhall ſoon have it in my power to diſcuſs my wiſhes with you by con-

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verſation inſtead of the pen. The affairs of this country darken daily. Both St. Valeri and his brother-in-law talk of a removal to England. The intrigues of the Convention are levelled as much at fortune as at rank, and it is now plain that every man with pretenſions to either will be made a victim or a beggar. If I am not miſtaken, we ſhall be in London before Chriſtmas, though to deal fairly with Sir William Oldham we ſhould rather emigrate to *Florence*; but being now in a different humour, and my views altered, I ſhall be ſtrenuous for England. Indeed there will be no occaſion, as De Rallon's meaſures are already taken, and we ſhall accompany his family. Meanwhile let me hear again from you; and deſcend, deſcend, I beſeech you, but a ſtep or two, from the immenſe

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immenſe elevation of virtue, to the level of nature, and of the unhappy, but ſincere and ever attached,

EMMA DE ST. VALERI.

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LETTER LXIX.

PERCIVAL *to* MADAME DE ST. VALERI.

The Impetuosity of Youth an Enemy to Happiness. Novelty. True Friendship. Female Reputation. Emigrés.

So it is ever; the wisdom of Solomon himself is pedantry to the bosom against whose passions it militates. Were I to discard the moral share of it you ascribe to me, so far from being elevated, I should soon sink in your opinion. In my last I endeavoured to divest myself of all bias, and to give you the best advice my understanding could suggest, but I am convinced you must wait for happiness. I begin to fear you will have none

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none during the ſpring of life. When the impetuoſity of youth declines, when experience teaches you that happineſs depends little upon externals, and very much upon the formation of the mind, you will then begin to enjoy the excellent faculties with which you are endowed, and by their means poſſeſs a greater ſhare of bliſs than falls to the lot of many. For this however you muſt wait ſome years, but be not diſmayed, and endeavour to curtail the intervening time by the exertions of your reaſon, ſtruggling with the uſual tumults of youth, and the *miſtaken* PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

Your poet, and a charming poet he is, would lead you right: but then you muſt ſtudy him thoroughly. The lines you quote celebrate the pleaſure that ſprings from novelty, and there is no doubt that novelty is a ſource of pleaſure,

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ſure, but it is infinitely leſs copious and leſs exquiſite than many others. The contemplation of an affliction borne with fortitude, or of a virtue exerted againſt our wiſhes, is far, far ſuperior to all the gratification of new ſenſations, which after all is the peculiar enjoyment of children. "As thoſe things," ſays an eloquent reaſoner, "which engage us "merely by their novelty, cannot attach "us for any length of time, the paſſion "of which it is the object is the moſt "ſuperficial of all the affections; it "changes its objects perpetually, it has "an appetite which is very ſharp, but "very eaſily ſatisfied, and it has always "an appearance of giddineſs, reſtleſſneſs "and anxiety. In ſhort, the occurrences "of life, by the time we come to know "it a little, would be incapable of affect-"ing the mind with any other ſenſation "than

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" than thoſe of loathing and wearineſs, if " many things were not adapted to affect " the mind by means of other powers " beſides novelty in them." We muſt not, therefore, although it naturally mixes in our pleaſures and paſſions, lay ſo great a ſtreſs upon it. While thinking of the nature of novelty, an idea occurred to me, which, although it be no way applicable to mankind, I cannot help mentioning to you; and that is, that the happieſt and wiſeſt of Beings can derive no enjoyment from it: to HIM all is known, paſt, preſent, and future.

If you do not enjoy the pleaſures that ariſe from the mixture of ſenſibility, virtue, and independence, be aſſured the fault is chiefly in yourſelf, by a miſtake in the idea of independence. I have already ſaid we muſt depend on others if we chuſe to live in ſociety, but ſtill the

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the ſoul is free, and will remain ſo amidſt all the ſhackles of cuſtom.

I do underſtand you, my dear friend, and I wiſh to Heaven I could make you underſtand true happineſs. A ſeparation from your huſband will be the very reverſe of it. I am fully convinced that you will, in every reſpect, be a dreadful ſufferer by ſuch a ſtep. I fear I ſhall but diſguſt you by my perſeverance in my opinion; but I cannot help it: as long as you beſtow the name of friend upon me, I will, to the utmoſt of my power, perform the duties of friendſhip; and I ſhould ill do that by an inſincere and baſe approbation of your opinions, or by ſuffering my judgment to be biaſed by your inclination contrary to the dictates of my underſtanding. Let me then repeat to you, that my judgment is, that your preſent lot is happineſs itſelf compared

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compared to the proſpect that awaits you in a ſeparation. I will not pretend to perſuade you to think yourſelf happy; I ſee you are not: but I have always told you that there are degrees of happineſs and miſery. When once you leave your huſband, remember you turn your back, not alone upon him, but upon ſociety, and by ſociety I not only mean your own ſex, but alſo the moſt valuable part of ours. You ſay that in leaving your huſband you do not throw down all virtue. I muſt, *in ſpite of the cruelty of it*, inſiſt, that to a woman of ſenſibility her fame is an eſſential requiſite to happineſs. Do not again aſk me if I think that I am lecturing a ſchool-girl; I think no ſuch thing: I am anxious for the preſervation of a friend, of one who, bleſſed by nature with the nobleſt qualities, has to ſtruggle with the errors that have

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have ſprung from the ſtrength, the too early ſtrength of her own faculties, in the culture of which ſhe has not been properly aſſiſted. You are too young and too unexperienced to judge of the danger of the precipice over which you are about to leap, and I ſhould indeed have little reaſon to think more highly of you than of a ſelf-willed ſchool-girl, if you could poſſibly be angry at any attempt to ſnatch you from it. You have a long life before you, and if you mean to ſecure the ſmalleſt chance of happineſs in it, you muſt preſerve your fame untainted. Do not be raſh, do not throw away all that is moſt deſirable, for the gratification of a young will, which you will ſorely repent not having bridled. I feel this an important criſis for you, and I ſhould eternally condemn myſelf if I ſuffered either indolence or flexibility to gloſs

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gloſs over the way of your ruin, or if I did not point it out to you.

I rejoice that you are coming to England, and with St. Valeri's family. From your own account I am charmed with Madame de Rallon, and I am determined to entertain a hope that you will yet, by compliance and ſelf-conqueſt, render St. Valeri an intereſting and active promoter of happineſs to you and to your friends. Let him not feel your ſuperiority, and with a little dexterity you may not find it impoſſible to make your ſcheme his. He is but young, and who knows what ſtart his mind may yet take? What a glorious reflection will it be to you, if by patience, mildneſs, and condeſcenſion, you ſhall be able to awaken it to thoſe ſuperior attainments and enjoyments with which you are juſtly charmed. I ſhall be happy on your account to ſhow St. Valeri and his brother

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ther every attention in my power, as will my Julia all in hers to yourſelf, Madame de Rallon, and the little Roſe. We already call you all our Emigrés. Adieu! and remember PATIENCE, which ſhall teach you to ſmile at all your griefs.

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LETTER LXX.

SIR RICHARD BRAINLESS *to* PERCIVAL.

Sir Richard ſtraining out a Conundrum bewilders himſelf. He mentions meeting with George Stanley.

DEAR SIR,

PRESUMING, howſoever you may be otherwiſe diſpoſed to diſagree in your ideas with my friend, *your brother Charles*, that you would have no objection to ſee him well provided for, conſidering that *he is now totally diſhed*, I take up the pen to write to you to let you know what came into my head, and what I have been thinking of doing for him.

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him. Our friend Jack Stanhope thinks it's *the beſt thought* that could have entered the heart of a friend to all parties, and as I know you have a good opinion of *Jack Stanhope*, I have no doubt you will think ſo too. You know I have a great affection for your brother, and by the Lord I need not tell you I have been all along very uneaſy, whenever it came into my head that he was doing himſelf up, and could not laſt. He is now *completely diſtilled*, and the next thing will be incaſeration, if ſome ſtep is not *ſpeedily* taken to prevent it, and enable him to make ſome other puſh at fortune without the riſk of being ſwept *with the canaille of debtors* into ſome horrible, peſtiferous incloſure of bricks and ſpikes.

Being engaged to pay a viſit at Cloud-cap Caſtle to my uncle Lord Dolt, I ran my friend Timmy Goſling down in my curricle, and we talked of it all the way; but I had thought of it before, for Goſling had

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had nothing to do in *the originality of the idea*, which was all my own, and Jacky Stanhope will tell you that I expreſſed it to him long and long ago *. When we got to Cloud-cap Caſtle, I found my uncle, Lord Dolt, dreadfully *indiſpoſed with the megrims*, and it was ſome days before we could ſee him, and a whole fortnight after, before I recollected the circumſtance, which *I did* on being put in mind of it by Timmy Goſling, who thought of it with one of *the beſt puns* I ever heard, on ſeeing one of my uncle Lord Dolt's hens under a three-corner cage, and a woman flinging ſome *hulled oats* to her. "Why," ſays he, "*is that* "*there hen like Charley Percival?*" I

* The idea, when the reader arrives at it, will appear to be originally Mr. Stanhope's, but adoption and invention are very often miſtaken by wiſer heads than Sir Richard's, who, beſides, it will be remembered, complains of the frailty of his memory.

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tried a long long while to find it out, but I was *obliged* to give it up at laſt, when he laughs and ſays; "Why, *becauſe* "*the perſon that puts him into his cage* "*muſt provide him with groats.*"—GROATS—mind the word *groats*, it all depends upon that. Though, perhaps, you mayn't know *the meaning* of it, no more than I did till Timmy explained it to me. *If ſo*, I muſt beg leave to diffuſe the information by telling you that *incaſerated people* have a right to call upon their incaſerators for *fourpence* a day, and that I need not tell you *is a groat*. So that my uncle Lord Dolt's *hen* and *priſoners* are both fed upon groats. I beg your pardon, I could not help putting this in my letter, as it came into my head while I was writing, and as I thought you would think it *a good thing*, though at firſt *a little* obſcure to gentlemen *unacquainted*,

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acquainted, as you and I, *with prisons*. Timmy indeed was never incaſerated *but once*, but then he is ſo *obſervant*, and has ſo retenacious *a memory* that nothing eſcapes him; though as *to wit* he ſeldom aims at that, and that made this ſo much the more pleaſant, coming as it were *unexpectedly* from ſuch a man, and *perhaps* the novelty of the thing was *half the wit of it*; but that I leave you to judge. Lord Dolt has not the *ſlighteſt* objection to it, and *the buſineſs* only waits *your anſwer* to be determined upon. My Lord begs his compliments to you, and mine alſo with my reſpects to Mrs. and Miſs Percival.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours obediently,
R. BRAINLESS.

P. S. I met my old ſervant *George Stanley* the other day at Shrewſbury; he

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was as ſmart *as a carrot*, but he had the aſſurance *to deny* being in your neighbourhood *lately*, and ſwore me out as to the affair *of the Bull and Miſs Percival*.

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LETTER LXXI.

PERCIVAL *to* SIR RICHARD BRAINLESS.

He enquires for his Brother.

SIR,

I AM obliged to you for the honour you have done me in addreſſing a letter to me, which I aſſure you amuſed me not a little. I obſerve that you wrote in a hurry, as you have omitted *the buſineſs* you propoſed to Lord Dolt, and to which you ſay his Lordſhip has no objection: but I confeſs to you I am leſs anxious about it than to know where my brother is, and I write purpoſely to requeſt that you will inform me if you know. Mrs. and Miſs Percival join me in compliments: and I am, Sir,

Your moſt obedient Servant,

E. PERCIVAL.

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LETTER LXXII.

SIR RICHARD BRAINLESS *to* PERCIVAL.

Sir Richard pawns his Honour, and alſo his Soul. He wonders at Percival, and hunts a little Learning. A liberal Offer.

YOU do me but bare juſtice *upon my honour*, in imputing my overſight of not mentioning *the principal ſubject* of my letter, when I did myſelf the honour of addreſſing a letter to you, and I beg you will do me *the farther juſtice* to believe that I NEVER in my life did ſuch a thing before. You *cannot but ſee* it was all owing *to my eagerneſs* on the ſubject of your brother's poſſible incaſeration, though I beg you to be at eaſe, for I ſee your

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your anxiety, as I assure you, *on my soul*, that I have had no information of that having YET taken place; and I am *very happy* to see *you are so uneasy* about it, as it makes it a certain thing in my mind that you will thankfully agree to the thought I have thought of, that goes *to root out* the mischief of incaseration *entirely*.

By the by, allow me to express my surprize that a man of your penetration did not immediately catch *the unexpressed idea*, as our friend Stanny says, *when he gives hints*. "I hate," says he, "your "*vulgar* understandings that wait for "*common words*, give me the genius that "catches *the unexpressed idea*." Here let me observe to you, how much inferior the Roman *verbum sat sapienti* is to the French *Le Sage entend à demi mot*. By the way I forget whether this observation is *mine* or *Stanny*'s, but its a good

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one. The Romans required a *whole word* at leaſt, the French only *half a one:* now, many Engliſh underſtand *a nod or a wink*, and I heard a man of taſte ſay, that ſo far was language from being *neceſſary* to expreſs ideas, he never looked at a figure of Weſt's without knowing *what was paſſing in its thoughts.* There I confeſs he went beyond me, I can't ſee into *a picture's thoughts*, but I can into *a good actor*'s long before he ſpeaks. It is clear however, you, Sir, cannot ſee into mine, or my uncle Lord Dolt's; and yet, *I beg pardon*, can any thing be more plain than that the beſt remedy for incaſeration is a ſeat in parliament? Hollands is not more ſovereign *for a wind cholic:*—though there's ſomething wrong in my metaphor, for the one is *a preventative*, the other *an expulſive*; the one acts *by qualification*, the other *by eructation.*

But,

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But, Sir, to return to *the buſineſs* of my former letter: your brother Charles certainly behaved *very indecently* to me. You heard I ſuppoſe how he went off from Cheltenham, but Sir Richard *is above catching at ſtraws when a friend is ſinking.* So the very day that Timmy Goſling's condundrum of *the hen and priſoner* brought my friend into my mind, I ſtated the whole ſtate of his ruin to my uncle Lord Dolt. Lord Dolt is a very good-natured peer *when he has not got the megrims.* "My Lord," ſays I, "damn it, give him the borough of "Cloudcap, there's a good uncle." My uncle *loves humour*, and he is always kindeſt to me when I ſay ſomething witty to make him laugh; and ſo I aſked him Timmy's condundrum, *as if it was quite new*, which ſet the peer a laughing, and he ſwore Charley *ſhould be* returned for Cloudcap, which *very luckily* happens

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to be vacant *by the death* of his Lordſhip's couſin, Commiſſioner Leadly, the late member. The peer bade me tell you his terms ſhould be *very moderate*, and that as it was a thing *abſolutely neceſſary for Charley*, he has no doubt you will think nothing of adding five hundred to three thouſand pounds, which he ſhould expect *from any body elſe*. I requeſt a ſpeedy anſwer; and with compliments to the ladies, remain, Sir,

Yours obediently,

R. BRAINLESS.

N. B. I ſuppoſe that you know that *a ſeat*, beſides the overthrow of incaſeration, will put it in Charley's power *to make terms with Miniſtry*.

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LETTER LXXIII.

PERCIVAL *to* SIR RICHARD BRAINLESS.

Juſt Indignation.

SIR,

I CANNOT be offended with your letter, becauſe it is impoſſible to peruſe it, and think that offence was intended. But while I enter into your character, I cannot leave you and your noble uncle Lord Dolt, or your companion Mr. Timothy Goſling, in the dark reſpecting mine.

I know not with what members of the Britiſh parliament you are acquainted, or from what corrupt ſources you draw your knowledge or your principles, but

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the members I have the honour to know and call my friends, are men of the niceſt feeling and pureſt patriotiſm: to purchaſe a ſeat is, in their opinion, highly criminal; to make uſe of the powers beſtowed upon them by their conſtituents for the purpoſes of enriching themſelves, an infamy that the rack would not force them to ſubmit to; and the ſupport they give to the government, they deem a duty ariſing from the conviction of the pure intentions, grand deſigns, and eminent abilities of his Majeſty's Miniſters. Sir, I am happy in thinking as they do; and although I would have given the half of my fortune to have ſaved my brother from the harpies that have deſtroyed him, and would ſtill, to retrieve for him the mind he poſſeſſed before he had the misfortune to be introduced to the gang of knaves and ſharpers that have ruined him, I would

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would rather know that he were in prison, or dead, than believe the proposal in your letter was made with his consent. I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

E. PERCIVAL.

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LETTER LXXIV.

LORD DIGBY *to* PHILIP TOWERS.

Emigrés. A Dilemma produced by fine Eyes. Madame de St. Valeri.

DEAR PHILIP, Dover.

THE enormities of the ruling people at Paris, and of their mobs, have driven away moſt of the nobility and perſons of birth. St. Valeri's ſiſters were ſo alarmed, and his wife was ſodeſirous of returning to England, that it was impoſſible to withſtand their united entreaties, and St. Valeri and M. de Rallon, his brother-in-law, who has already made conſiderable purchaſes in the Engliſh funds, both ſolicited me to take charge of the family,

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family, promiſing to join them in London early in January. I urged all the reaſoning I was maſter of to prevail upon them to accompany us, and Madame de Rallon and little Roſe petitioned, with all the eloquence of words and tears united, that they would not delay the journey, but De Rallon was reſolved to wait for a ſum of money he was to receive at Chriſtmas, and St. Valeri to make ſome arrangement as to the debts upon his eſtate at Oſtroville, for which he was ſupplied by a bill on Oldham to a conſiderable amount. As I thought the fears of the ladies but reaſonable, I conſented with pleaſure to take them under my care. Through means of Lord —— ——— I obtained proper paſſports, and every thing expedient to remove the obſtructions of ſections, municipal officers, and a long etcetera.

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At Boulogne I was apprehenſive of ſome trouble, as doubts had ariſen reſpecting the features of Madame de Rallon, whoſe eyes were deſcribed in her paſſport as *non decidé*, though they were clearly dark hazle. I was fortunately well known in the town, and the party being conſidered as an Engliſh one, we were quit for a few fulſome compliments to the brilliancy of our friend's eyes. And now we are on Engliſh ground, and ſhall be to-morrow in London, where I ſhall carry the party to my houſe till they can diſpoſe of themſelves better. I have much to ſay to you reſpecting Madame de St. Valeri, but at preſent I can only write you a ſhort letter to aſk you to meet me in town. Juſt let me ſay, however, that the chances are a hundred to one that this beautiful eccentric creature throws herſelf away, and creates unhappineſs

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pineſs to others beſides. She is writing to Percival, and we imagine that our letters will ſtill find you at Bevil-Lodge. Pray let me ſee you or hear from you immediately.

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LETTER LXXV.

MADAME DE ST. VALERI *to* PERCIVAL.

She leaves her Huſband at Paris.

Dover.

THE date of my letter will inform you of my arrival in England. Yes, and without St. Váleri; but make yourſelf eaſy, my friend, about me, at leaſt for the preſent. It is with his conſent I am here, in company with his ſiſters, and under the protection of Lord Digby. I had begun an anſwer to your laſt, when the confuſion of Paris, and the domiciliary viſits which St. Valeri and M. de Rallon received from the ſections, created fears among us that were followed by the ſtep we

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we have taken. St. Valeri at firſt oppoſed my leaving him, but in conſideration of his ſiſters, and perhaps of a bill he drew on Sir William Oldham, for the purpoſe of keeping down the intereſt of the debt on Oſtroville, he conſented to our coming together. M. de Rallon and he are to follow, after they have ſettled ſome buſineſs on which they have ſet their minds. The carriage that has been ordered to take us on a ſtage to-night is waiting, ſo that I only took up the pen to tell you and Mrs. Percival that your Emigrés are arrived, and will be happy to receive your kind attentions. Adieu!

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LETTER LXXVI.

PHILIP TOWERS *to* LORD DIGBY.

Caroline's Education. An unexpected Letter. The Doubt changed into Myſtery. Charles Percival. Arabella Stormont.

MY DEAR LORD,

I HAVE been ſo much occupied in reading and talking with Caroline, in directing her ſtudies, and aſſiſting her in the management of her feelings and imagination, that I have not had time to anſwer your laſt kind letter from Paris. The native innocence of this charming young woman had been preſerved pure in the education ſhe received at her aunt's, a maiden

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maiden lady who reſided in the country, and abominated great towns. That education however had been limited to the common routine of inſtruction; and the knowledge of herſelf, of her faculties, of her paſſions, the habits of ſelf-direction, ſelf-examination, ſelf-poſſeſſion, had not been conſidered as parts of education, and conſequently her heart had been left unprepared for the ſtruggles which might be its lot in life. The impreſſion that has been made upon it by the events of the autumn, and her exertions to maintain the magnanimity ſhe admires, have had a conſiderable effect on her health, and it has been with a hope of excluding the ſons of Hippocrates that I have been aſſiduouſly adminiſtering the medicine of the daughters of Minerva, employment.

I was going to acknowledge the Paris letter when your Dover one arrived. I

ſhould

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ſhould not have delayed a moment complying with your requeſt of meeting you in Hanover-ſquare, but that a meeting more important has been arranged. Edward and Julia ſet out for town to-morrow, to welcome the emigrants and preſs their paſſing the holidays at the Elms, while I ſtay to go over with Caroline and the Bevils. Percival hopes to prevail upon your Lordſhip to be of the party, and if you have no decided engagement, which I truſt is the caſe from the ſuddenneſs of your return, my wiſh would not be wanting, were it neceſſary, to induce your acceptance of the invitation. I ſhall ſend this by the poſt that your Lordſhip and the party may expect our friends, and as I have time to lengthen my letter, I will add ſome information that I know will give you pleaſure.

We were at breakfaſt when our meſſenger returned from the poſt with letters.

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ters. On opening them your name and Madame de St. Valeri's were echoed round the table: but gueſs our ſurpriſe when Edward, opening one of his, exclaimed, in an elevated tone, "STANLEY!" The various emotions of the company, viſible in their countenances, would have been a high treat to an indifferent obſerver, and was doubly ſo to one intereſted as I was. *Stanley!* was repeated by all but Caroline, whoſe ſurpriſe was expreſſed by the variation of the colour in her face. Edward read the letter firſt to himſelf, and ſmiled as he proceeded. The pauſe was a painful one to his ſiſter, during which and the peruſal of the letter Julia and Mrs. Bevil glanced eager looks at her, and Bevil, fearful of diſtreſſing her, kept his eyes on Edward, while I obſerved them all. "Riddle my rid-" "dle my ree," cried Edward, before he began to read out, and then read as follows:

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lows: I will copy the letter verbatim, *nota bene* and all, for it muſt not be loſt.

Shrewſbury,

" Honoured Sir,

" I am certain I never had the plea-
" ſure of being known to you; but as
" Sir Richard Brainleſs ſays he knows
" you have a good opinion of me, and
" that you have as much as ſaid you
" mean to ſerve me whenever it lie in
" your power, I think it my duty to
" write and thank your honour for your
" good intentions towards me, not know-
" ing how I have deſerved it; but it may
" be that ſome worthy gentlemen have
" been kind enough to ſpeak in my
" praiſe to Mr. Percival, whoſe great
" goodneſs in ſerving thoſe who ſtand
" in need I have often heard of, and Sir
" Richard ſaid he did as much himſelf.
" I hope your honour won't think me
" proud

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" proud becauſe I don't intend to go
" to ſervice any more, as bleſſed be
" God I have come into a little fortune
" by the death of a relation; but if Mr.
" Percival knows of any poſt or em-
" ployment about the court or exciſe, I
" ſhall be bound to pray for you as long
" as God ſhall ſpare my life, and I beg
" pardon for making ſo bold, only I
" thought after what Sir Richard told
" me, that you might be offended if I
" did'nt take ſome notice of it. As for
" the bull and all that about which he
" made himſelf ſo merry, I aſſure Mr.
" Percival that I know nothing at all
" about the bull, but as for Triton, I
" always loved the dog, though the Ge-
" neral never cared a braſs farthing about
" him, which is all from, honoured Sir,

" Your reſpectful humble ſervant,

" GEORGE STANLEY.

" *N. B.* Be

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" *N. B.* Be pleaſed to direct to Mr.
" George Stanley, at Mrs. Margaret
" Stanley's, corner of the upper creſcent
" —Shrewſbury.

Conceive, my Lord, the ſenſation produced all round by the *honoured Sir*, and follow our countenances line by line through the letter down to the concluſion of the N. B.; you cannot err: conviction grew up with every word, and every face was illumined with joy. There was a kind of congratulatory look paſſed round, and I never ſaw ſo divine a ſmile as irradiated the features of Caroline. As for me, I cannot tell you what pleaſure it gave me. Appearances had gone a great way in my mind, I confeſs, but I had never thoroughly believed that the brave Stanley had been the footman of Brainleſs; not, however, becauſe he was brave, not becauſe he was good, for Brainleſs's George Stanley may be brave and

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and good, and eſtimable; but becauſe his manners, his notions, his ambition for mental elevation, beſpoke a mind that young as it was had been otherwiſe employed than in the ſciences of bruſhing coats and blacking ſhoes, or in looking out for a poſt about the Court or in the Exciſe. "The enigma," ſaid Edward ſmiling, "is by no means ſolved. I "am at no loſs to know how this letter "came to be written, having been ho-"noured with one from Sir Richard him-"ſelf, in a poſtſcript to which he tells "me that he had been converſing with "George Stanley; and this farther de-"monſtrates that his Stanley is a very "different man from ours: but it is ſtill "a riddle that Triton ſhould be an ac-"quaintance of both and be beloved by "them."—"Is it not probable," ſaid Bevil, "that your friend is a neighbour "of General Tankerville's, and that he

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" received the dog in a preſent; for you " ſee, as the letter ſays, that the General " did not care a braſs farthing for him." I ſaid that that could hardly be the caſe, as what I had written to General Tankerville would undoubtedly have produced ſome intelligence reſpecting any other perſon of the name known to him.— " It only remains for us, my dear Ed- " ward," ſaid Julia, " to find out who " he is, but I am afraid that will not " be eaſy, for it muſt be confeſſed that " his conduct has been very ſtrange. " Be he who he will, our ſuſpicions have " never reached him, and his behaviour " at Lord Powic's is extremely unac- " countable."—" The only way to un- " ravel the myſtery," ſaid Mrs. Bevil, " is to take a journey to General Tan- " kerville's. There can be no doubt of " his having been ſome way connected " with that family."—" One would not " be too anxious to force his acquaint-

" ance,"

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" ance," ſaid Caroline bluſhing. " True, " my dear Caroline," ſaid Edward, " and " therefore we will not be in a hurry."— " Curioſity to be ſure," replied ſhe ſmiling, " makes one wiſh to have it " off one's mind."—" True," rejoined Edward, " and therefore I think I had " better take a trip ſoon into Derby- " ſhire." Julia perceiving Percival's play upon his ſiſter, and alſo that ſhe felt it, relieved her by changing the conver- ſation to Madame de St. Valeri. " We " muſt not forget our Emigrés," ſaid ſhe. " I think," ſaid Mrs. Bevil, " that " you ſhould go to town to meet them, " and bring them to the Elms to paſs " the Chriſtmas." Julia ſaid ſhe thought ſo too, and Edward being of the ſame opinion, our plan was arranged before we got up from the table.

Percival is extremely unhappy about his brother, as no one even among his

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old companions has ever heard from him or of him ſince he left Cheltenham. I was not without hope that you might have met him in Paris, and I begin to have ſad apprehenſions about him. Oh, my dear Lord! what a lamentable career has his been! thirty thouſand pounds every farthing gone, and an eſtate of eighteen hundred pounds a-year mortgaged to its full value, in the courſe of two or three years! one can hardly conceive it. But there was ſcarcely a luxury, and I will do him the juſtice not to except that of benevolence, in which he did not indulge, or a gaming table which he did not frequent. He entertained no opinion of female honour; and though he had made it a point not to be the ſeducer of women, he took no care to diſtinguiſh between innocent kindneſs and profligate advances, ſo that by returning warm attentions for caſual ſmiles, he betrayed the

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the unwary while he thought himſelf courted. I have gathered this both from his conduct and his converſation, and I know ſeveral whom this error of his has rendered miſerable for their lives, and I firmly believe it will be a pang to his own mind if he lives to reflect upon it. With reſpect to Arabella Stormont, I am inclined to acquit him of her ruin, for in fact the woman had no ſoul, and it is evident that neither fidelity nor choice has any concern with her amours. I have ſeen that Rumbold you mention. His father was maſter of a very ſwift-ſailing brig, in which he traded to the Leeward Iſlands, and after ſome lucky adventures turned merchant, in which capacity he amaſſed a large fortune, to bequeath to this dunderhead. I have not the ſlighteſt doubt that he will leave the wretched woman in France, and that ſhe will undergo all the miſery

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that uſually attends the depraved creatures who diſhonour their ſex. It is time I ſhould conclude my letter, and I am deſired by the whole party here to make their beſt compliments acceptable to you and the ladies, and to ſay that Percival and Julia hope to find you all recovered from the fatigues of your journey, and ready for another. Adieu!

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LETTER LXXVII.

JULIA *to* MRS. BEVIL.

A party for the Elms. Madame de St. Valeri and her new Sisters.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I SHALL write but a few lines to tell you that we shall be at the Elms on Saturday, and beg you to be there before us. Edward is writing to Mr. Stockton to prepare him to receive you, but I will trouble you to inform Mrs. Burke that there will be four additional beds wanting, besides those of our own family-party when we are all met, as we shall be accompanied by Madame de St. Valeri, her two sisters, Lord Digby, and

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Mr. Stanhope, who meeting the party on the road between Dover and London joined them, and on being invited by Edward to continue with them during the holidays has consented to come down with us.

I cannot tell you how much delighted Lord Digby is with our immediately coming to town: he is highly amiable in his manners, and has a very interesting and penetrating countenance. Madame de St. Valeri I have not seen since she was a girl going over to France to finish her education, but that is not very long ago, and the uncommon partiality she shewed for me at the time, rendered it no difficulty for me to recollect her, although she is considerably altered as to height and form. Her sentiments and mode of reasoning, of which I have heard many speak, had given me an idea of a bold, masculine person: on the contrary

her

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her appearance is replete with feminine delicacy, and altogether I never ſaw any thing more beautiful than ſhe is. She is full of life, and was in raptures at our arrival in Hanover-ſquare, whither we immediately drove, intending to order the carriage to proceed with our baggage to an hotel, but of which my Lord would not hear a word, ſaying that he expected us and was prepared for us. Madame de Rallon is alſo very handſome, and the little Roſe a ſprightly lovely girl about fifteen years old. They ſpeak no Engliſh, ſo that I am obliged to make the beſt of the French I learned from the Pouſſins; and conſidering the want of habit, I managed it tolerably well, I might ſay admirably, if I were vain enough to give ear to the flattery of theſe agreeable ſtrangers.

Our beſt love to my dear father. Kiſs our dear little Edward and Julia for

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us, and tell them they will ſee us at the Elms. God bleſs you, my dear mother! prays your ever fondly affectionate daughter,

JULIA PERCIVAL.

P. S. Edward being anxious to diſcover our young friend of Cowper's farm, and not being able to take a journey for ſome time to Derbyſhire, has written a letter to Sir Richard's George Stanley, urging him to come to the Elms in the courſe of the holidays, aſſuring him that the ſubject on which he wiſhes to ſpeak to him is of importance to both. I have myſelf no doubt we ſhall obtain ſome information from him.

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LETTER LXXVIII.

SIR RICHARD BRAINLESS *to* JOHN STANHOPE, ESQ.

The Baronet complains, and throws out a great Temptation to his Friend. Laughing Fits between Lord Dolt and Mr. Gosling, in which Sir Richard joins, without knowing why. Association of Ideas a happy Aid to Memory. Sir Richard's Attempt at Oratory.

DEAR STANNY,

I HAVE affronted that *sanctified son of a methodist*, by asking him why his brother Charley would soon *be like a hen under a three-cornered cage in a poultry-yard, fed on barley?* He is a blooddy stupid fellow and has no relish for a pun,

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ſo he takes the ſimile in dudgeon, and to gratify his ſpleen *againſt my conundrum*, he lets the borough of Cloud-cap ſlip through his fingers, and poor Charley may rot in jail for him.

I made ſtrong intereſt with my uncle Lord Dolt to let Charley be returned in the room of his late couſin, commiſſioner Leadly, and his Lordſhip, *after a hearty laugh at the conundrum*, agrees to the thing, and I writes and offers it to *your ſanctified friend*, and he ſends me a ſnubby bit of anſwer, with a parcel of nonſenſical *parſony phraſes* about corrupt ſources, niceſt feelings, pureſt patriotiſm, &c. and ends with ſaying he would ſooner Charley ſhould *lie in priſon* or *die and be damned:* there's a brother and a Chriſtian methodiſt for you! *O mora! oh tempores!* damn the fellow! his letter gave my uncle Lord Dolt *a diſmal megrim*. I ſhould like to kick him. I

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treated him with great contempt however; I *never anſwered his letter:* that's the way *to ſhow your breeding*, Stanny, treat ſuch ſtuff with contempt, don't anſwer it. By my ſoul, Jack Stanhope, if you'll revenge this *I'll give you Mouſe* to yourſelf. Swear to me *you'll carry off his wife*, and you need not ſend the mare back again: Mouſe, with the gig and harneſs, bridle, ſaddle and tugs for Tandem *all your own.*

It coſt me *three whole days* to put my uncle Lord Dolt in good humour again; and how do you think I did it at laſt? One day after dinner as he ſat ſilent, looking at nothing; he had juſt got down *his ſixth glaſs of* Madeira; but mind he had previouſly drank *two digeſters of Coniac* before the cloth was removed: at that lucky criſis I ſtared at him with one of my knowing looks, and ſays, "My Lord Dolt, I think"——here I happened

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happened to pauſe, upon which he ſmiled and ſaid, "Dicky I give you joy of it." Timmy Goſling laughed, *as he always does when the Peer does*, at which my Lord, tickled *with ſome conceit that he could not explain*, went into a fit of laughing, and Timmy and he kept it up for *full five minutes* without ſtopping; and I could not help laughing too, but then it was only becauſe laughing is catching, for the devil a bit *did I* ever ſee *the mare's neſt* they had found out. At laſt when it was over, and my uncle Lord Dolt had ſwallowed *another bumper of Madeira*, "Dicky," ſays he, "it is a "pity THE PHENOMENUM ſhould be "loſt."—"What *phenomena* my Lord?" ſaid I:—by the bye my Lord did ſay *phenomenum*.—"Why," ſaid he, "*your* "*thinking*."—"Oh! I'll tell you, my "Lord," ſaid I; and before I had time to ſpeak, Timmy burſt out a laughing again.

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again. " I beg your pardon, Sir " Richard," ſays he, " but there's no " reſiſting my Lord Dolt's wit."—" No " more there is," ſays I, and I laughed heartily, *to pleaſe my Lord*; and the more ſo as I was afraid he might find out that *I did not diſcover* his Lordſhip's wit at all; and I really thought all the time that Timmy could not contain himſelf on account of the *lapſus linguæ* that had *dropped from the tongue* of my uncle Lord Dolt, but this Timmy afterwards *denied*, and ſwore earneſtly that it was *ſome wit of my Lord*'s which he could not remember. However, ſo far my uncle Lord Dolt began to be in good humour, and toſſing off *another bumper*, knocks the table with the foot of his glaſs, and cries; " *Now for it.*" What there could be in thoſe three words to ſet us off again I don't know, Timmy laughed, and I laughed, and Lord Dolt laughed, till I quite *forgot the thought* that

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that had come into my head, and when his Lordſhip put the queſtion again; "Well, Sir Dicky, what *did* you think?" I ſhould have been totally at a loſs, if *as luck would have it*, a hen had'nt *cackled under the window*. The *hen* brought *the groats* into my head, *the groats Charley Percival, Charley Percival the borough of Cloud-cap*, and *the borough of Cloud-cap* the *happy thought* that had occaſioned ſo much merriment: and what do you think it was?—"What do "you think my Lord," ſays I, "as this "here Mr. Percival is off, to return "*your own nephew* Sir Richard Brain-"leſs?"—"Humph!" ſays he, "you "are no orator, Dicky."—"But," ſays I, "my Lord, *orator fit*, oratory is a "thing that a man may learn if he has "any ideas at all."—"Ay, but what's "to be done in *your* caſe?" ſaid his Lordſhip; and Timmy laughed; but that he *always does* whenever Lord Dolt opens

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opens his mouth.—" No Dicky," ſaid his Lordſhip, " truſt me oratory *is not* " to be learned; I had a tough trial at " it myſelf. But come, ſuppoſe you " try at it now; give us a ſpeech, Brain- " leſs."—I was in a cue, and I took the Peer at his word. I got up, and being on the left ſide I put my left foot forward, and laying my left hand on the table, I aſked for a queſtion. " *Peace* " *or war?*" ſaid my Lord. Upon which I thumped the board and began. I am tired of writing Stanny, or I would ſend you my whole ſpeech, for *it was a damned good one,* and both my Lord Dolt and Tim Goſling *acknowledged it:* but it's too long to remember. I ſpoke full five minutes, proving that war was itſelf peſtilence and famine, and I ſhould certainly have ſpoke five minutes longer, if in my warmth I hadn't unluckily uſed the figure of *Johnny Grott* for the *North of Scotland.*

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land. I will tell you *that*, for it was damned odd. "Mr. Speaker," ſaid I to my uncle, but I looked at Timmy Goſling, that my Lord might ſee that *I knew very well* I was not ſpeaking to the Speaker:—"Sir, it is clear to me that "the conſequence of a war will be three "evils; three evils, Sir; there will be "no *potatoes* in *Ireland*, no *oats* in *Scot-* "*land*, and no *race-horſes* in *England:* "and if ſo, how long do you think that "the Iriſh cows and peaſants can live? "How can the Highlanders make ſuch "good ſoldiers? and *a fortiori*, can race- "horſes run without oats? Sir, theſe "evils will *be general*; they will be felt "*all over Europe*; they will be felt from "the iſland of Scilly to *Johnny Grotts.*" —"*Grotts!*" ſaid my Lord; that puts me in mind of *the hen.*"—Timmy laughed, my Lord laughed, and I forgot the reſt.

Yours in haſte,

RICHARD BRAINLESS.

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P. S. Write ſoon and *ſwear revenge* or ſend me back Mouſe. My uncle Lord Dolt *wants an orator* for Cloudcap: do you know e'er a one with three thouſand pounds to play with?

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LETTER LXXIX.

FREDERICK STORMONT *to* PERCIVAL.

Ineffectual Struggles of a Mind enslaved by Passion. Seduction. Charles Percival. A Return of Good for Evil.

DEAR PERCIVAL,

FORGIVE me for not having earlier attended to the promise I gave you when leaving England, of informing you of my motions and of the progress of my victory over a passion to yield to which you had convinced me was disgraceful. The little success I have obtained in my struggle is too good an apology. I cannot be happy my friend: neither calm

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calm reflexion, nor the buſtle of war can baniſh from my mind the remembrance of the enraptured hours I paſſed in courting the lovely and innocent Arabella Nugent, or the ſtill livelier tranſports of my heart when I fondly believed that marriage had made her all my own. I had ſo entirely united all ideas of happineſs with her beauty and the poſſeſſion of her love, that every enjoyment of life has ſeemed to me a void ſince I diſcovered my loſs. I have mixed with gay aſſemblies, I have courted danger, I have been wounded in battle; but nothing has been able to cure the wound that was given to my peace by the infidelity of the woman I had taken to my boſom. Her image haunts my mind, and though I know her worthleſs I cannot forget that ſhe was lovely. I think of her crime, and I ſhudder for her; I think of her ſmiles, and long to baſk in the glow they were

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were wont to ſpread through all my frame. In ſhort, Percival, my thoughts have a double train; now they run in the channel of horrors, and now they are enflamed with ignominious love and deteſtable deſires: now they paint her faithleſs, infamous, and loſt; and now again I trace thoſe looks that won my ſoul, and for a moment loſe the ſenſe of miſery in the enchantment of remembered joys. Oh, ſeduction! diabolical art!—Do not, Percival, think I would wound you by alluding to the individual inſtance of it that has deſtroyed my happineſs: my apoſtrophe is aimed at the crime alone. The Devil's firſt crime was ingratitude; ſeduction was his ſecond: ſecond in ſucceſſion, but firſt and foremoſt in miſchief. By the one he damned himſelf alone; by the other he ſpread damnation, and blighted every joy.

The perturbation of my heart flows from

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from my pen, which I took up, my friend, merely with the intention of giving you information respecting a circumstance with which I believe you unacquainted. I now fear that what I have written will appear to you to have been the consequence of it, and I am inclined to tear this and write another letter; yet, being convinced that you will take it upon my word that my overflowing misery has not been set in motion by any malignant resentment, I will send it as it is.

Charles Percival is with the Austrian army. He appears to me to be prompted, like myself, with a desire of throwing away an unvalued life. While dining with some of the officers belonging to the main body, I was told that a young Englishman of that name had lately offered his services to General Clairfait, and had distinguished himself already in some of the skirmishes that are perpetually

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tually taking place between the advanced posts, notwithstanding the season of the year. Desirous of ascertaining the person of the volunteer mentioned, I rode over to the quarter in which he was posted: do not, my dear Percival, allow your firmness to be shaken at what I am obliged to add—I have told you he *is* with the army, of course alive: but it was my fate to meet him borne wounded towards his lodging in the village where his party is stationed. I recognized him immediately, but I remain unknown to him. I am truly sorry to tell you that the surgeon who attends him says his wounds are of a very dangerous nature. He also informed me that he seems extremely careless about a recovery. Having obtained a solemn promise from this gentleman that he would not mention my name, I have engaged him to take care that his patient should want no aid that money could

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could purchaſe. This I thought due to our friendſhip, my dear Percival, and I thank God that I feel myſelf capable of acting in the ſame manner, even had there been no ſuch motive for my conduct. I wiſh he may yet live to enjoy better pleaſures than thoſe he has been accuſtomed to. He may be happy, for he has loſt nothing but what he may retrieve. I will not add the thought that now riſes accompanied with a ſigh and tears; but I will frankly tell you that while I am ſincerely expreſſing this wiſh, I fear the event of his preſent ſituation will render it fruitleſs.

Pray let me hear from you immediately. The army is likely to remain in its preſent poſition; at all events wherever the head-quarters are I ſhall be found; in the meantime I beſeech you to make yourſelf as eaſy as the nature of my intelligence will permit, and

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reſt aſſured, that although I take no viſible part in Charles's ſituation, every attention ſhall be paid to him that he ought to receive as your brother. Adieu!

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LETTER LXXX.

PERCIVAL *to* FREDERICK STORMONT.

Revenge not the Paſſion of a noble Nature. Charles's Errors extenuated. A ſudden Journey.

GENEROUS, noble Stormont! oh that to theſe epithets I could add that of happy! your letter has indeed affected me extremely; doubly affected me. My brother at the point of death perhaps, and ſuſtained by a man whom he has injured! How does my heart thank you, my friend, for ſuch an elevated view of nature! Let our modern philoſophers compare this with the paſſion of

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revenge, and dare if they can to call the latter, Nature. How is the weakneſs I have aſcribed to you in one paſſion counterbalanced, forgotten, loſt, extinguiſhed in the greatneſs of ſoul you now diſplay! Who will now liſten to the miſanthrope when he talks of vice as Nature? No, Stormont, virtue is its eſſence: all the reſt, however wide diſperſed, is but the blight of ſome diabolic blaſt, which we cannot trace in its coming, though made but too ſenſible of it by its effects.

I am very unhappy, my dear friend, at Charles's ſituation. How do I pray that his life may be ſpared! Why did he thus hazard it? We have all reaſon to deprecate a haſty death, and he ſhould rather have wiſhed for time. I write to you in haſte, and with great emotion. I ſhall perhaps ſee you before you receive my letter, and therefore I ſhall not lengthen it.

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it. I ſhall ſet out immediately for the Low Countries, for, diſcouraging as your letter is, I cheriſh a hope that I ſhall yet converſe with Charles, perhaps recover his health, perhaps retrieve his mind. Oh! let me aſſure you, Stormont, it was originally a good one. I remember a thouſand intereſting incidents of infancy and youth which would convince you that his errors, his failings, excuſe me if I do not ſay his crimes, are the unnatural diſtempers of contagious aſſociates. Think not, however, that I defend him to you, with whoſe noble ſpirit he needs no defender: but I am uneaſy, I am unhappy.

Lord Digby, who was at the Elms when I received your letter, has kindly expreſſed a wiſh to accompany me, and we ſhall not loſe a moment of time. If you receive this before you ſee us, expect us immediately after. My friend,

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my dear Stormont, you deſerve to be happy. Providence I truſt has ordained that time ſhall ſoften your feelings and ſorrow. I entreat you to think of quitting the army and of returning with us, or at leaſt of following us ſoon. May our meeting be propitious to this requeſt!

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LETTER LXXXI.

JOHN STANHOPE *to* SIR RICHARD BRAINLESS, BART.

Revenge ſworn. Sarcaſtic Flattery. A little Learning in Greek. How a Clamour may be raiſed in every Part of the Kingdom againſt a War. Lord Chopſtone. Mr. Stanhope's Reaſon for thinking the Engliſh Government a good one. Sentiment. A Friendſhip ſecured. An unexpected Meeting and its Conſequences. Events and Adventure at the Elms.

MY DEAR SIR RICHARD,

No wonder that you and Percival ſhould not agree on points in which you differ ſo materially. He is an odd fiſh, but reſt your heart content, Mouſe is mine and the gig, with its etcetera, for I ſwear

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revenge not only on the fanatical fool who has dared to inſult my friend, but on the proud brunette who has treated me vilely. I'll tell you *all how and about it* Baronet: *bloody* ſcurvily has ſhe treated me; and I have a plan, Dicky, which I will digeſt before I ſend off this letter, and when I have digeſted it, not the devil himſelf with all the guilotines, racks, and halters, in France and England, ſhall deter me. In the meantime I'll try to compoſe myſelf by ſcribbling to you.

I have a great deal to tell you, but firſt let me ſay, I like your letter amazingly. Your obſervations on the unmeaning laugh of your uncle Lord Dolt and Goſling were excellent. As for Mr. Timothy, I need not tell you, Sir Dick, that

> He'll take ſuggeſtion as a cat laps milk,
> And tell the clock to any buſineſs that
> We ſay befits the hour.

You

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You will be at no loſs Baronet to know whence I take this quotation, nor perhaps the following which I think applicable to the *lapſus linguæ* of the word *phenomenum*. But faith I forget now, Dicky, whether you much care about being thought up to Greek. You did uſe to τυπτω, τυψω, τετυφα: however, if you have forgot it, you may paſs it over and ſay nothing about it. The lines I mean are theſe:

A λιττλε λεαρνινγ ις α δανγερυς θινγ
Δρινκ δεεπ ορ ταστε νοτ θε Πιεριαν σπρινγ.

I was charmed with the ſhort paſſage you ſent me from your ſpeech, and think the three evils the three beſt things I ever heard. I wiſh you would give a hint of them to whatever member may be returned for Cloud-cap, for, depend upon it, they would make a very great impreſſion not only on the houſe but on

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the nation at large: for, if the war is to put an end to the growing of potatoes, oats, and race-horſes, you will moſt certainly have a clamour againſt it in every part of the kingdom.

Having now replied to the principal points of your delectable letter, I will tell you what has been happening to me: all how and about it, Sir Dicky. After ſpending ſome pleaſant time near Aſhford, in Kent, whither I told you I was goining, I accidentally fell in with Lord Chopſtone, whom I had met in the autumn in Oxfordſhire. He had been at Tunbridge and Maidſtone, and was going down to Dover. On a converſation with him, I allowed myſelf to be perſuaded to accompany him. I tell you this, becauſe it is of importance to the ſcheme that has entered my head. You know, Dick, that I don't care a damn about politics: the government that ſecures

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ſecures plenty of caſh and pleaſure is the government for me; and for thoſe, where is there one in the world like our own? My Lord, however, made no ſcruple of abuſing it, and before we had gone a ſtage together, he not only told me his opinions, which as we went along he demonſtrated to be the only genuine and natural ones, but he aſked me to ſtate mine to him candidly. Now that's what I never do to ſtrangers. Candour is for boſom friends, ſuch as you, Sir Richard: not that I repelled his Lordſhip: I told him a ſtory or two, by which, though they contained not a ſentence of my own opinion, he firmly believed that his principles and mine were alike, and he thinks better of me than if I had uttered the fineſt political maxims or moral ſentiments in favour of the equality of nature. The day of ſentiment is paſt, Dicky: he who is ſo

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weak as to attempt it damns himſelf at once; ay, even if he means what he ſays. He muſt be a raw chap who moralizes now, unleſs, like Percival, he makes a group of his own, and defies both ridicule and ſuſpicion. To make one's way in theſe times a clever fellow does not addreſs the heart; no, he ſoars to the head: he tickles the fancy, he enlivens the ſpirits, and carries every thing before him. You are yourſelf a dab at this mode, Sir Dick; you gain affection by amuſing, you captivate by entertaining.

But to return to Chopſtone, who I believe never captivated any body by his logic: I went with him all the way to Dover. At firſt I thought he meant to croſs the channel, and I was ſurprized to find that all his buſineſs was to converſe with ſome ſmugglers who live upon the coaſt there. He then told me he had been

been disappointed in not meeting some French patriots, and that he intended to remain sometime at Dover, or in the neighbourhood. I felt no desire to continue his companion, and having sufficiently made him my friend by pleasant and equivocal contradictions of his opinions, which humoured his propensity for demonstrating, I took my leave of him, promising to visit him when he returned to Oxfordshire.

My next adventure was a most unexpected meeting at Canterbury with Lord Digby, Madame de St. Valeri, whom I knew a little as Miss Coverley, and two Emigrant ladies. They supped and staid all night at the inn where I had put up, which gave me an opportunity of insinuating myself into the party, who brought me to town the next day in their coach. I was doubly glad of it, for the weather was no longer *giggish*, and I con-

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I conſigned Mouſe to the care of my man, who drove her gently up to town, where ſhe has been in winter-quarters ever ſince. Percival and the lovely though cruel Julia came to London the very next day to meet the travellers, whom they engaged to go and ſpend the Chriſtmas holidays in Oxfordſhire. They both ſo warmly inſiſted on including me in the feſtive plan, and Julia's eyes were ſo irreſiſtible, that I attempted no reſiſtance, and in a few days we poſted down to the Elms, where we found the party from Bevil-lodge. The time paſſed very agreeably; Madame de St. Valeri was all life, while Julia was divine in every thing ſhe ſaid and did, and I was not ſorry to find that ſhe did not draw herſelf up on many broad occaſions afforded her by Madame de St. Valeri, who profeſſes more enlarged and liberal notions than Percival's wife has yet dared

to

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to do. From time to time I made rhymes on the women, which pleaſed and were praiſed. Even Towers, from his ſeat in the higher regions of Parnaſſus, deigned to ſmile and applaud *my pretty verſes*; declaring that the light poems that charm a friendly circle are to them as important as the bolder flights of poetry.

To add to the amuſement of the circle, Lord Chopſtone returned to his ſeat in the neighbourhood in Chriſtmas week, and brought with him his contraſt, that good tempered fellow Lightleſs. I am in no humour for it at preſent, or I could paint you ſome pleaſant ſcenes enough, in which this down-throat-thruſting Lord and his flexible friend were laughably oppoſed upon the canvaſs by Madame de St. Valeri; the one perpetually loud and ſyllogizing, the other mild, ſmiling, and

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and always *somehow, he did not know how, ſtruck* with whatever the laſt ſpeaker ſaid to him. But I have more important points to diſcuſs with you, Sir Dick, and have no time to caſt away on thoſe heterogeneous ſubjects of the empire of ridicule.

To come cloſer to the point, then, my friend, for I write diffuſely and learnedly, becauſe I know it's to your taſte; you are to know—I think I ſee your ſurprize—that Charles Percival is dying or dead of the wounds received in a ſkirmiſh between ſome Auſtrians and a party of French; for it ſeems that on leaving Cheltenham he went over to the ſeat of war in the Low Countries, and attached himſelf to the army of General Clairfait. The news of his being wounded was received at the Elms the day after Chriſtmas-day in a letter written to Percival;

and

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and by whom do you think? Frederick Stormont, by Heavens! who is himself at the Auſtrian head-quarters. The news affected Percival very much, and he reſolved to ſet off inſtantly for the Continent. Lord Digby and Mr. Towers both propoſed to travel with him, but it was arranged that the latter ſhould remain, his Lordſhip being very ſtrenuous in his deſire to accompany Percival. They went away together on the very day the letter was received, after it was decided that the reſt of the party ſhould continue at the Elms till they heard from the travellers.

The abſence of Percival inſpired me with a reſolution to make a bold attempt. I had become in reality completely enamoured of Julia: her beauty was heightened by the affability and ſmiling attention with which ſhe conducted our friendſhip,

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ſhip, and I will ſtill ſtake my life to make her mine. I felt a trepidation, I know not why, that withheld me from making an advance for two days after Percival's departure. She is an uncommon creature, and I was therefore at a loſs how to proceed. The uſual approaches of eyes, ſighs, knees, and toes, with ſuch a woman, and in ſuch a party as ſurrounded her, would have been juſt as wild as opening trenches before the rock of Gibraltar. On the third night, however, during ſupper, as I ſat next to her, I inadvertantly ſighed and preſſed her knee. Gueſs my aſtoniſhment, when without moving, ſhe looked at me with a ſmile, and ſaid, "Are you ill, Mr. "Stanhope? you are pale." The fact was, I trembled and was pale: and glad enough to ſeize the opportunity of retiring, I aſſured her I was taken ſuddenly

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denly ill, made an apology, and bade the company good night.

When I got to my room, I was infinitely puzzled to account for her ſmile; but, far from being encouraged, I conſidered it as the death warrant of her friendſhip. A deſperate thought now entered my head, and I was counſelled by my paſſion to ſteal to her chamber, wait for her, and like another Tarquin, terrify her with death and ſlander. I diſmiſſed my man for the night, locked the door on leaving my room, and explored my way by the light of the moon to hers. I found it open, entered, and had ſcarcely time to get into a cloſet, that ſtood open to invite me, when Julia and her mother came in together laughing. I gave myſelf up for loſt. They whiſpered ſomething that did not reach my ear. I then heard them walking about the room, and talking diſtinctly enough of Madame de

St.

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St. Valeri. They paſſed the cloſet door ſeveral times: and at laſt, one of them turned the key which was on the outſide, and locked me in. Judge of my feelings, Sir Richard. I flattered myſelf, however, that I ſhould ſoon have an opportunity of a happy releaſe from the hand of Julia herſelf. The clock ſtruck twelve; no Julia came: the family had indulged in later hours during the holidays. It ſtruck one; ſtill I heard no Julia: the houſe had ſeldom been up ſo late; it might happen, however. It was a bitter cold night; I began to wiſh myſelf by the fire that had been prepared for me in my own room. Oh! how the hour dragged on to two! It ſtruck, and I damned my ill-ſtar. My limbs were benumbed; my blood was freezing, and ſcarcely circulated: Julia herſelf had ſhe appeared, could not have thawed the ice that clung about my heart.

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heart. I made an effort to burſt the door open. That I could not have done with all my ſtrength; how vain then the attempt enfeebled as I was!—I felt about for ſomething to wrap round me: there was nothing in the cloſet but ſome of Julia's caps and hats. I put on one of theſe to preſerve my ears from falling off. The froſt was ſeverer than ever I felt it in my life. When it ſtruck three, I ſat down on the floor, more dead than alive, with my knees to my mouth, and my teeth chattering in my head. Knowing the tendency of extreme cold to produce an eternal ſleep, I began to entertain ſerious apprehenſions for my life, and thought to avert the danger by raiſing myſelf and jumping about the cloſet. With ſome difficulty I roſe, but after one or two nervous motions of the thighs and elbows, I found myſelf deprived of active power, and was fain to reſume

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reſume my chattering poſition with my chin upon my knees, and my hands thruſt into my boſom.

I could now have conſigned to damnation all that bore the name of Percival. It was clear, my Lucretia had changed her room. It was equally evident I could not eſcape unſeen, and it was by no means certain that I ſhould not periſh in the curſed cloſet before any one came to open it; I therefore reſolved to brunt the malice of a diſcovery, and between four and five o'clock in the morning, I began to roar as loud as I could to make myſelf heard: but I apprehend my Stentorian powers were alſo enfeebled, for though it ſeemed to myſelf that I roared like a lion, not a creature in the houſe was diſturbed.

Juſt as the clock ſtruck five I heard the door of the chamber open. I liſtened;

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ened; it might be Julia: it was Julia. As ſhe ſet her candle on the table, ſhe gave a deep ſigh, and uttered my name: "Oh, Stanhope!" ſaid ſhe, "why did I "ever ſee thee!" The ſigh and words which ſix hours before would have vibrated on every nerve of my frame, barely ſtruck the torpid tympanum of my ear: my very heart was benumbed, and I would have reſigned all the flame a hundred Julias could have raiſed by love, for that which her maid could have produced by the application of her candle to the grate. Being, however, aſſured of the emotions of her heart, which though ſhe had ſtifled before me, broke out when ſhe thought herſelf alone, I would have returned the ſigh. I thought I did, but if I did ſhe heard me not. I attempted a louder one, but the wind in its vent took an odd kind of a key between a ſqueak and a groan. "Who's there,"

cried

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cried she. "Julia!" said I, as passionately as a frozen tongue could express her name. "Heavens!" answered she, "whose voice is that?"—"Stanhope's," said I, "Stanhope, who loves you to "distraction; but for God's sake open "the closet door or I shall die." She came towards the closet, then stopped as if undetermined. In the meantime I tried to rise, but in vain: I was frozen to the spot, and sat bent as I have described to you. "Stanhope!" repeated she, "and in my closet!"—"Oh, Julia!" said I, "have mercy, let me out, and do not "repent the confession you made, when "you thought yourself unheard."—"But I am afraid," she replied, "to "open the door. If I do, Stanhope, will "you promise me to be cool?"—"Oh!" said I, while all my bones rattled again, "you will find me cool enough."—"So

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"So you ſay now," cried ſhe, "but I "know how warm you are."—"Cold as "death, Julia," replied I: "Nay, I ſhall "die with cold, if you keep me here "any longer.—"Patience, dear Stan-"hope," ſaid ſhe, "I hear ſomebody "coming." At that inſtant ſeveral perſons entered the room, and ſhe ſtepped up to the cloſet door, which ſhe unlocked and threw wide open. I was a little confuſed, Sir Dicky, to be ſure; and even frozen as I was I ſeemed to petrify, when on caſting my eyes towards the room I perceived the whole party I had left at table, and moſt of them with lights in their hands. Deceitful woman! You now ſee, Baronet, that the ſigh and the *Oh Stanhope!* were curſed flams of hers, while ſhe was preparing confuſion for your friend. They all burſt out a laughing, and well they might, for a moſt truly ridiculous figure did I make; periſhing

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with cold, my teeth chattering, bent chin and knees together, with a ſtraw-hat over my toes, and a fine laced cap over my ears. Oh! damn it, I ſhall never forget it, and damn me if ever I forgive it.

There I ſat in my cage, no more able to move off my bottom, Dicky, than a ſcrewed mandarin from a chimney-piece, while they laughed much longer than your uncle Lord Dolt and Tim Goſling did. At laſt Madam Lucretia made a fine ſentimental ſpeech ready cut and dry, which I ſuppoſe ſhe had learned from her methodiſtical huſband for the purpoſe, if ever ſhe ſhould be attacked. But I'll teach her to moralize by and by. Not one of them ſpoke but herſelf, and then they all went off laughing together, leaving a candle. My man was ſent to me, and by his aſſiſtance I got back to the room I had quitted, where

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where he managed to make up a good fire from the remains of the one I had left when my evil genius tempted me to go in queſt of an adventure. I never felt ſuch excruciating torments, Sir Richard, as in renewing the circulation of my blood: I would ſooner die than undergo the operation again.

You may be ſure I did not ſtay to do myſelf the pleaſure of breakfaſting with the merry party. The moment day-light appeared, I mounted my hunter, which my fellow Thomas had brought down to the Elms a day or two after I left town with the company from Hanover-ſquare. Knowing that Chopſtone was prepoſſeſſed in my favour, and being maſter of his weak ſide, I immediately rode over to his ſeat, which is but ſix miles diſtant, and told him the ſtory in ſuch a manner as completely to make him my friend. I find he has been

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refuſed by the ſiſter, and now hates the whole family. I have conſulted him on my revenge, and laid before him a plan which pleaſes him highly. He will aſſiſt, but not openly. You, my friend, I have no doubt will alſo aſſiſt, oſtenſibly or privately as you pleaſe. Remember it is a common cauſe

I need not tell you, Dicky, that I have run myſelf low. Some caſh will be wanting; but our revenge will be mutual. Write to me immediately, and let me know if you can be at Lord Chopſtone's before the end of the week. His Lordſhip bids me ſay that he will be happy to ſee you. Don't fail, and ſo for the preſent, *vive & vale!*

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LETTER LXXXII.

SIR RICHARD BRAINLESS *to* JOHN STANHOPE, ESQ.

Revenge backed. Mr. Gosling, Pope, and Homer. Lord Dolt's Opinion of the three Evils.

DEAR STANNY,

DEPEND upon my being with you some time on Saturday. *I can't before:* so tell Lord Chopstone with my compliments. I never heard of such treatment before. I'll not spare *for some hundreds*, Stanny, *to be revenged* on these people, both on your account and on my own. I tell you I will be with you *on Saturday*, when I hope your plan will be ready for

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execution. If *Tarquin ſtabbed Lucretia*, why ſhould not *Stanhope ſtab Julia?* Nothing ſo eaſy as to get over the water, and there Lord Chopſtone has plenty of friends for you. I'll go with you for a while, Stanny, to keep up your ſpirits. Damned ſcurvy trick indeed! You muſt not bear it. You cannot ſhew your face till you are revenged. No that's impoſſible.

A very nice letter though. Do you know, Timmy is not the numſkull I took him for. Why he read off the Greek in Engliſh, juſt as if he had been Pope himſelf tranſlating Homer; for he ſaid it was Pope, and laughed. Goſling is given to laughing: it's a pity, it makes him look ſo fooliſh when there's nothing to laugh at. Zounds! what would he have done if he had ſeen you in Mrs. Percival's laced cap! I write in bluddy haſte, as my uncle Lord Dolt has ſent for me to

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to hear a pun of Timmy's ſo *vive & vale!*

Your faithful

R. BRAINLESS.

P. S. I am glad you like the three evils—my uncle Lord Dolt ſays they do very well for a room, but would not do for the Houſe.

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LETTER LXXXIII.

JULIA *to* PERCIVAL.

The Bulwark of Female Virtue. The Closet-Adventure related by Julia. A Prescription for the Use of Seducers. A Postscript written by Madame de St. Valeri.

AT length, my dearest Edward, your Julia has been initiated into the first degrees of the art of seduction. I know you too well, Percival, to fear that you will suffer your indignation to precipitate you into the folly of risking your life and my happiness, or I should be more uneasy than I am at the event that took place at the Elms a very few days after your departure. The dependence I have on your

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your principles, and the firmneſs of your character has enabled me to treat it with the lightneſs it deſerves, and renders it an eaſy taſk to me to continue that unbounded confidence in my Edward, from which my fond heart has not once deviated ſince I could call him mine.

Situated as you may poſſibly be with your brother when this letter arrives, I doubt whether I ſhould venture on my communication at preſent, but why not? If Providence has inflicted upon you the grief you had juſt grounds to fear from Mr. Stormont's letter; the ſtory I have to tell will not augment it: it may indeed break in upon it, and you are too kind to me to indulge immoderate ſorrow. I pray to Heaven the reverſe may be the caſe! and that Charles may be enjoying and returning the delight of your affectionate friendſhip! If ſo, give him a ſhake of the hand for me,

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and tell him that his ſiſter ardently longs to ſee him at the Elms.

And now let me draw your attention to the gallant Mr. Stanhope; yes, Stanhope. Could you have ſuppoſed it, Edward? You are not more ſurprized than I was: for, from the firſt moment of our acquaintance with him, he never betrayed the ſlighteſt indication of gallantry; nor, on the other hand, did he take any pains to appear ſcrupulous; but by an even tenour of delicate and agreeable behaviour, he gained our good opinion and our friendſhip. I now ſee how completely he is maſter of his art, and I cannot but pity my ſex when I find that there are ſuch conſummate demons of ſeduction mingling with them in the paths of life. My dear Edward, I will not pay you the fulſome compliment of aſcribing my ſafety to your full poſſeſſion of my heart: I cannot love you

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you more than I do; but never ſhould a woman truſt her defence to the force of any of her paſſions. It is principle, and principle alone that ſhould be the bulwark of female virtue. So agreeable, ſo artful a man as Stanhope will find it no difficult taſk to ſet paſſion in oppoſition to paſſion; and the beſt meaning of our ſex, unacquainted with the nature of their emotions, and untaught to connect them habitually with virtue and religion, would be in the utmoſt danger of becoming a prey to ſo accompliſhed a ſeducer. It is not eaſy to diſtinguiſh between the innocent emotions of pleaſure we receive from attentions, and the paſſion of vanity. There would be no living in ſociety were women obliged to bar up all the avenues of flattery, in doing which genuine kindneſs muſt be alſo excluded; for very often there is no knowing at firſt the one

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from the other. Time alone ſhews the difference, and then is the direction given by vanity or by principle. A vain woman is ſo blinded with the idea of the conqueſt gained by her beauty that ſhe attributes nothing to the ſelfiſh ends of the ſeducer. Her emotions are ſet in action, and ſtep by ſtep ſhe is led to her deſtruction. But a woman who has been convinced that a conqueſt obtained by her beauty in the very face of the principles of religion and morals is inſult and ignominy, is rouſed by the very firſt deſcent of open admiration and friendly intercourſe to *private praiſe* and *ſecret marks of paſſion:* her principles diſpel all miſt from before her eyes, ſhe detects the cloven foot, ſhudders at the demon in the human form, and calls upon her friends to aſſiſt in exorciſing it. My dear Edward, you love me too well, and know me too well, to think that I am

2 attempt-

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attempting to glorify myſelf in your eyes. No indeed: but theſe thoughts riſe in my mind, when I think of the warfare my poor ſex has to maintain againſt the arts of ſeduction. Oh! that every girl had Bevils for her parents, and a Towers for her friend!

But let me not keep you in ſuſpenſe. You and Lord Digby were hardly gone before I perceived a ſenſible alteration in Mr. Stanhope; but one that did not give an opening for me to ſuſpect what was paſſing in his mind. He was thoughtful, abſent, and I feared ill; but as he reſumed his gaiety at times, the appearance was unnoticed. On the third night at ſupper, he took a chair between Madame de Rallon and me, and was ſilent till a little before the cloth was removed, when addreſſing ſome words to her, he preſſed his knee againſt mine, which he prevented me from thinking accidental by con-

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continuing the preſſure, and accompanying it with a ſigh as he turned to me. I was confounded, yet I would have paſſed it off, that I might have had time to conſult my dear mother, but he was ſo pale and agitated on my looking at him, that I could not help ſmiling, and aſking him if he were ill. He declared he was, and begged to retire.

As ſoon as ſupper was over, I called my mother out with the intention of telling her my thoughts on what had occurred to me. The moon giving a good light, I took no candle, but led her to my bed-chamber. We had got to the top of the flight of ſtairs on which it is, when, looking towards the end of the gallery, we plainly ſaw Stanhope go into my room. The doubt I wiſhed to entertain now vaniſhed, and I hurried on, that in caſe he ſhould have ſeen us, and been diſpoſed to a retreat, he might not effect

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effect it without a discovery. We entered the room laughing almost immediately after him. I pointed to the closet, and whispered to my mother to talk on an indifferent topic. We walked up and down the room, and I carelessly turned the key of the lock of the closet door, being confident that he was within. To be certain that he was not concealed by the bed, I looked under it and searched the curtains, and we then left the room. In the gallery I explained my suspicions to my mother, which now wanted no proof, yet we proceeded to his chamber. We found it locked, and the key taken out. We tapped, and beat against the door. We expected no answer, and our expectation was not disappointed.

Satisfied with having caged our monster, we deliberated on the conduct to be pursued,

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purſued, and my mother adviſed that we ſhould communicate it to the whole party on our return to the parlour, and concert a ſcheme to expoſe him. This had nearly been defeated by the indignation that broke out in my father and Mr. Stockton, who propoſed to turn him neck and heels out of the houſe. Madame de St. Valeri and Madame de Rallon laughed heartily: ſo did my mother; and Towers taking the ſame part, ſoon ſoothed my father and Mr. Stockton into good humour, and they joined the laugh on his propoſing to let the cloſeted hero enjoy the ſharp froſt that had been ſet in for ſome days. The occurrence afforded us converſation both ſerious and amuſing; and as the time paſſed agreeably, we determined on all going together to let him out before we went to bed. The time of his re-

leaſe

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leaſe was protracted from hour to hour by laughable debates on the ſufficiency of his puniſhment, and it was five o'clock before we were unanimous for releaſing him.

Before we left the parlour, it was ſuggeſted by Towers that there was a poſſibility of his endeavouring to account for his having concealed himſelf in the cloſet, and he thought it would not be amiſs to put that out of his power by a little ſtratagem that had come into his head, which was, by ſome encouragement on entering my room to give him an opportunity of expoſing his views before I opened the cloſet. Accordingly we proceeded up ſtairs, each having a chamber-candle, that the ſpectacle of a ſhivering gallant might not be ſpoiled by the want of light. My companions walking very ſoftly ſtopped at the door, while I went

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went in alone, and, as directed by Towers, heaved a ſigh, and ſaid in a ſoft accent, "Oh, Stanhope! why did I ever ſee "thee!"—It produced the effect our friend foreſaw. He called to me, declared himſelf diſtractedly in love, and begged me not to retract the ſecret confeſſion I had made. Nor did he forget to beg that I would open the door of his cage, which, after a joke upon the *warmth* he felt, I did, and at the ſame time, the company all walked in, and formed a ſemicircle about him. To laugh had been determined, but had we on the contrary determined not to laugh, to refrain would have been impoſſible. He ſat ſhivering, head and knees together, with his feet in a hat of mine, and his face almoſt covered with one of my caps, which he had put on to defend his ears from the cold. He did not utter a ſyllable, and he muſt have ſuffered prodigiouſly

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giouſly from the effect of the froſt. It had been agreed that we ſhould ſtare at him, laugh, and leave him, without ſpeaking; but I could not reſiſt the opportunity of beſtowing a moral upon him. I told him that a ſeduced female was an angel in compariſon with her ſeducer, whom Providence ſooner or later failed not to puniſh: I aſſured him, in behalf of my ſex, that if ſeduction were his plan, he might depend upon meeting a hundred ſimilar mortifications for one infamous triumph; and I adviſed him, if it were an inherent diſtemper of his ſoul, to try as a remedy for it the preſcription I had now given him of freezing, of the efficacy of which our party left him to judge. We again laughed, quitted the room, and ordered his footman to be ſent to him. On ſeparating, I took part of Caroline's bed, and

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and you may ſuppoſe we were none of us early riſers, except the hero of the evening, of whom we ſaw no more, and who, we heard, rode off with his man, bag and baggage, by day-light.

Such, my deareſt Edward is the ridiculous ſtory, which I ſhould be ſorry you were firſt made acquainted with by any other pen than that of your Julia. As for Stanhope, I repeat that I know your honour and your principles too well to fear that you will follow the common impulſe of paſſionate men. I cannot tell you how much I admire Mr. Stormont for his conduct; and his courage cannot be doubted. At the ſame time I will own to you, that I am by no means of opinion that Stanhope has experienced the puniſhment due to ſo conſummate a villain, and I am ſorry to find, in the courſe of converſation, that there is no law in the Engliſh code that can reach him.

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him. The worſt of it is, that his crime though moſt infamous, may among many people be gloſſed over by his talents and eaſy manners. Good Heavens! that women ſhould be the dupes of ſhow! This fellow will make many a one curſe the hour ſhe was born, and it is a great pity that he cannot be ſhut up for life.

You may imagine our party have had a good deal of converſation on the ſubject. I love Madame de Rallon for the ſentiments ſhe has expreſſed upon it, but I am not quite ſo much charmed on the occaſion with Madame de St. Valeri; though I never ſaw any one more entertained with a ludicrous ſcene than ſhe was with the ridiculous figure Stanhope made. She ſaid I was cruel, and that ſhe would not have acted in the manner I had done; that men were not to be blamed, for they all knew that gallantry was expected by women;

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women; and a hundred other extraordinary things, which ſhe ſometimes ſpoke ſeriouſly and ſometimes equivocally, ſo that ſhe might be ſuppoſed in jeſt. Madame de Rallon managed her with great good humour. She ſaid very pleaſantly, that women were by no means wrong in expecting gallantry from men in general; it was their prerogative: but then it was a gallantry that conſiſted in delicate attentions, and in that protection and aſſiſtance which the weakneſs of their ſex naturally demanded, not a gallantry that aimed a ſtab at their peace, of which the inevitable conſequence was miſery, and that too attended with the contempt of the very perſon who cauſed it; for what was better known than that it is characteriſtic in the ſeducer to deſpiſe the woman he ruins? I could have hugged this amiable French woman: and

Madame

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Madame de St. Valeri could only laugh and ſay, " You talk it well for a woman " of faſhion."

I cannot help feeling an affection for Madame de St. Valeri, for there is evidently great goodneſs in her heart, as well as ſweetneſs in her countenance: and could the unfortunate bias of opinion ſhe has contracted on the topics of nature and cuſtom be ſet right, ſhe would be an amiable and charming creature; but at preſent I think her a dangerous companion for young people. It is very fortunate for Roſe de St. Valeri, that ſhe has ſuch a guide as her excellent ſiſter; and as for our Caroline, dear girl! the unbounded confidence with which ſhe treats me ſets me at reſt reſpecting her. I am endeavouring to win Madame de St. Valeri's affection and good opinion, with a view to divert,

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if poſſible, her wild idea of philoſophical nature into the channel of moral nature, which is the nature of the human ſpecies. I confeſs to you, my dear Edward, that I tremble for her; but I will become your aſſociate in the taſk of ſaving her, and may the God of Nature and of Virtue be propitious to our deſign! May he alſo be favourable to our prayers reſpecting your brother! May you bring him back with you! and we ſhall be happy indeed.

Your little Edward and Julia are well. Madame de St. Valeri ſays ſhe hopes there is no crime in being in love with the boy, and ſhe is perpetually kiſſing and fondling him. I need not tell you that the kindeſt regards follow you; but I will repeat, what I know you are pleaſed to have repeated, the love of your

JULIA.

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POSTSCRIPT *written in an envelope.*

I am under the neceſſity of giving a new envelope to my letter, which after ſealing I brought down and laid on the table for Towers to direct, and while I was attending to ſomething elſe, Madame de St. Valeri filled the back of it as you will ſee.

A Note to Percival written on the back of Julia's Letter, by Madame de St. Valeri.

This wife of yours I ſuppoſe has been making out a pretty ridiculous ſtory about her friend, the captivating Stanhope; and I'll lay my life ſhe has well larded it with moral ſentences upon gallantry; but obſerve, unread, I proteſt againſt them. It is all her own fault: I ſhould be glad to know what buſineſs ſhe has to be handſome. I declare I ſhould not have been half ſo long mealy-

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mouthed about it as the fascinated and cruelly frosted enamorato was, but you and this Julia are both of you odd creatures. I shall vote for your being put together into some Museum, and over the door it shall be written: *Here may you see a man and woman of the moon.* I hope your brother is recovering, and that you will bring him back to the Elms with you. Mr. Towers tells me he is handsomer than you are: I have just room to squeeze in, I don't believe him.

E. DE ST. VALERI.

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LETTER LXXXIV.

JULIA *to* PERCIVAL.

Mr. Stanhope's pious Reſolution. An atrocious Piece of Villany. Julia in Danger. She is reſcued, and by whom.

LITTLE did I think, my dear Edward, when I ſent off my laſt letter, that I ſhould ſo ſoon have to communicate a ſtill more atrocious piece of villany than the one I had deſcribed to you. I had heard of deſperate wretches, who, defying God and man, had committed murders and every ſort of crime without apprehenſion of the conſequence to themſelves, but it never entered my mind that a being capable of reaſoning, a poliſhed

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man, however he might be betrayed by his opinions of female frailty to baſe and fooliſh attempts, could have plotted the brutal and impracticable ſcheme of carrying off a woman by force. Have patience I beſeech you, my dear Edward; I have a hiſtory for you, that will not only ſurpriſe, but enchant you: a hiſtory that forms one of the myriads of proofs that Providence ſuperintends the events of life. Do not be vexed; do not be even ſorry: I am not. I am only grieved that there is ſo much wickedneſs on earth as there has appeared in the conduct of this miſerable man: but as to the action itſelf, I do not even conſider it in the light of an inſult. It is a horrid crime againſt the laws, to which the villain has now rendered himſelf amenable; but I truſt you will concur with me in thinking the agent no more a ſubject of private reſentment than

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an earthquake or a ſtorm would be from which I had been fortunate enough to eſcape.

Oh! how I hope that Charles may be better when this is delivered to you, but in every event I depend upon the fortitude and greatneſs of my Edward's mind, to counteract the influence of his emotions; and with this dependence I will proceed to give him an account of the deſperate villany of the wretch Stanhope.

Worked up, as he confeſſed to me, to a pitch of madneſs by the fury of his paſſions, which now alſo impelled him to revenge, he determined at the riſk of his life to carry me off from the Elms. He was aware that I was in the habit of walking on fine mornings to ſee poor Mrs. Dyer, who, ſince the death of her child, had admitted of no conſolation but mine; that I ſometimes took Caroline

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with me, but more frequently went by myſelf; and he knew that the road was lonely enough to ſerve his purpoſe.

On Thurſday laſt, the morning was very fine, the air being clear and pleaſant though froſty, and I ſet out without any companion about ten o'clock. I was a little ſurpriſed to ſee at the parting of the roads where one leads to the highway and the other to Mrs. Dyer's, a poſt-chaiſe, the poſt-boy off, and adjuſting his traces. No ſuſpicion, however, entered my mind, and I proceeded. As I approached, the boy got upon his horſe, yet ſtill kept doing ſomething to the harneſs: but no ſooner was I oppoſite to the chaiſe door than two men with crapes over their faces ruſhed out, ſeized me, and hurried me into it. Dreadful, indeed, were my feelings at that moment, and I ſcreamed with terror. One of them threatened to ſtop my mouth if I made

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made a noiſe, but the other never ſpoke. I aſſured them they were miſtaken, told them who I was, and entreated them to releaſe me, offering to pay double the reward they were to receive for taking me away. "Take care," ſaid the perſon who ſpoke, "if you attempt to cry "out, I have an inſtrument to put acroſs "your mouth; but ſit ſtill and you ſhall "not be hurt." I had now no reſource left me but my tears, and fortunately they flowed copiouſly.

Having mentioned my name, their perſeverance convinced me that there was no miſtake; and from the offer of the double reward making no impreſſion, I ſuſpected that the chief agent was himſelf one of the perſons. Stanhope ruſhed into my mind, and I immediately concluded that the mute could be no other man; but that was not corroborated either by his figure or his unneceſſary ſilence. After travelling more than an

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hour at a conſiderable rate, the chaiſe croſſed the London road, and in about five minutes after ſtopped at a deſerted ſhell of a houſe in a ruinous ſtate. At the back door, to which the chaiſe drove up, ſtood a horſe ready ſaddled and with holſters. Here I was taken out of the carriage, and hurried into one of the apartments, where I found a chair, and a table with wine, water, and biſcuits, which had been evidently provided for the purpoſe. In a few minutes I heard the voice of Stanhope imprecating the moſt dreadful oaths. "It was not my fault," ſaid the man whom I had heard ſpeak in the chaiſe; "you told me to bid it be at "the village by twelve."—"Well, "well," anſwered Stanhope, moderating his tone for fear of provoking his accomplice, "I believe I did. I will "rectify it: Do you make the beſt of "your way acroſs the fields, and get "home;

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" home; leave the chaise to me." Of that man I heard no more, but presently Mr. Stanhope himself appeared before me.

Indignation was my first emotion; but recollecting that I was in his power, I determined to try address. " Come, " Sir," said I, " do not urge on your " designs to the tragedy in which they " must inevitably terminate, if you pro- " ceed. Even yet desist, and I pledge " you sacredly my word to use every " effort I am mistress of to restore you " to the good opinion of my friends, and " you will deserve it; for the virtue " that you will display by conquering " yourself at this moment, and restoring " me to them, will a thousand times " outweigh the folly that prompted your " conduct at the Elms; and the noble- " ness of your voluntary sacrifice will " consign to oblivion the ridicule you

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" ſuffered. You can be generous I " know: be ſo to a feeble woman in " your power." His anſwer, and I ſhudder at the recollection of the horror I felt when he uttered it with a countenance in which was mixed ſavageneſs and deriſion, was: " Artful woman! " remember your ſigh in the chamber. " I care for no tragedy. You have " made a comedy of me. My ſhame " will be the ſtanding farce of the age; " but do not think I mean to encounter " it. When I am revenged, I may for- " give you for your beauty's ſake, and " time will ſoothe your loſſes; but I " have not a moment to loſe: hear me, " and ſubmit for the preſent." I now changed my tone: " Fool!" ſaid I, " I " am not afraid of you. Whither can " you take me, that I ſhall not be " able to gain aſſiſtance? Think of the " conſequences."—" Hear me," cried

 he,

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he, "and you will be convinced that "submiſſion is the ſole part left for you. "Revenge aiding my other paſſions de- "termined me to carry you off. The "ſituation into which your rage for vir- "tue has thrown me makes it impoſſible "for me to live in England. Your con- "duct has compelled me to go abroad, "and I am reſolved to take you with "me." The ſcheme appeared ſo irrational and impracticable, that I could not help treating it with a ſmile of contempt. "You will find it wiſe," ſaid he, "to "change the nature of your ſmile, when "you are convinced that my deſign is "not ſo unfeaſible as you imagine. "Know that from this moment till we "arrive in France, you will be conſidered "by all who meet you as an infant "woman, and my wife." Oh! Ed- ward! a barbed and poiſoned arrow would have been balm compared to the

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image raiſed by theſe words. I ſtared wildly at him, then flew to the door, which I found guarded by the mute. "All ſtruggle is fruitleſs, be aſſured," ſaid Stanhope. "By a miſtake, the "chaiſe, and the keeper, who is to have "charge of you, and who is doubly in "my intereſt, are delayed an hour "longer than was intended. I find the "man will wait at the next village till he "ſees me: I muſt therefore go for him, "but I ſhall ſoon be back. In the "meantime you are well guarded: the "perſon I leave is one of the keeper's "people. He has the means of con-"fining you, if you attempt to move. "Be adviſed to yield to irreſiſtible fate. "The keeper is prepared to hear you "call yourſelf Mrs. Percival, and he "brings the inſtruments of his profeſſion "with him." With ſuch a complication of determined villany laid before me, is it

it not extraordinary, my dear Edward, that my courage did not fail me? The wretch excited horror as he ſpoke; but when he left me and went off in the chaiſe that had brought me, I felt no tremour: I addreſſed a prayer to my Maker with confidence, and reſolved, as ſoon as Stanhope ſhould be out of hearing, to make an effort of perſuaſion or of ſtrength with the man whom he had left to guard me.

I ſat for ſome time with my head leaning on my hand. Gracious Providence! how inſcrutable thy ways, how unforeſeen thy interference! My mute had come into the room where I was, and obſerving no diſpoſition in me to be refractory, leaned over a window that looked towards the country. A minute or two of dreadful ſilence paſſed in this poſition when, great God! I beheld at my feet—Triton: Stanley's dog Triton.

I could

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I could almoſt have doubted my ſenſes. He crouched and placed his noſe on my foot. The mute turned round on his coming in, and ejaculating a *bey!* went to ſee if any body was with the dog. From my knowledge of Triton's ſagacity a thought inſtantly occurred to me of informing his maſter through him of my ſituation. I took a card from my pocket book, and with my pencil wrote theſe words; "Haſten to my aſſiſtance "I beſeech you, I am in imminent "danger." To this ſhort ſentence I ſigned my name, and putting the card between Triton's teeth, I patted him, and cried, "Go find your maſter, Triton." The dog inſtinctively bounded out of the room, bruſhing by the mute as he was returning to the door. I plainly ſaw the hand of Providence, and my confidence encreaſed. I roſe to look out, but my mute ſtamped, and pointed

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to the chair. I was certain Triton's maſter could not be far off, and I reſumed my patience. But, oh! it nearly forſook me when a diſtant ſound of the wheels of a carriage reached my ear. Never let innocence deſpair. Imagine, my Edward, and you will imagine the truth, that you ſee the deliverer of Caroline enter the room where I was ſitting. I fell on my knees, and from the bottom of my heart I thanked my God.

The brave youth came forward with a firm ſtep, but kept his hands behind him. "Who the devil are you?" cried the diſguiſed accomplice, whoſe voice I have certainly heard before, but do not recollect. "Who are you, Sir?" ſaid my deliverer. "I'll ſhoot you, by G—d!" ſaid the other, and went to the door for the piſtols he had left in the holſters. They however had been ſecured by my guardian angel, who now preſented one

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at the fellow. "Chouſed, by the Lord!" exclaimed he, and darted away, crying, "Every one for himſelf, ſo *ſure* is the "word."—"Stop, Sir!" ſaid the noble George Stanley—I ſhall always love the name—and he would have fired at the ſcoundrel, had I not begged him to reſerve his power for the villain I expected, who was now at hand, but forſaken by his daſtardly accomplice, who, taking advantage of my requeſt, leaped upon his horſe, and galloped off at full ſpeed.

The chaiſe was now driving up, and I diſtinctly heard Stanhope call out to the cowardly fugitive: "What's the "matter? ſtop, I ſay." I embraced the gallant Stanley, while I trembled with mingled fear and admiration. "This is the villain," ſaid I, "who is "coming—Stanhope, whom you ſaw at "the Elms." He replied: "Do not "be terrified I entreat you; be aſ-

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" ſured that you ſhall go ſafe hence, or " I be carried lifeleſs from the ſpot." As he ſpoke the daring monſter entered. " I'ſhoot you dead if you approach," cried Stanley. The madman ruſhed on; his opponent fired, advancing at the ſame moment; and I ſaw Stanhope fall. My defender preſſed me out of the houſe. Conceive my ſituation; but God ſupported me. At the door ſtood Triton, baying a man at whom Stanley preſented the other piſtol, ſaying, " Seize " that villain on the floor, who I am " ſorry to find is not dead, or I'll blow " your brains out, you ſee I am deter- " mined. Stanhope was now riſing. " Seize him this inſtant," repeated Stanley, " and bring him out, or you are " gone." The terrified keeper, who had accompanied the villain, haſtened to lay hold of the bleeding culprit as he attempted to riſe, and having pinioned him

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him before he got upon his legs, dragged him to the outer door. "Are you in "the chaiſe, Madam?" ſaid Stanley to me, while he kept his eye and the piſtol directed at the keeper. I got in trembling, endeavouring at the ſame time to encourage the poſtboy, who was alſo frightened at what was paſſing, which occupied but very few minutes. On being told I was in, Stanley retreated backward to the chaiſe, declaring to the man that he would put him to death if he let Stanhope go before it was out of ſight. He then jumped in, pulled the door to, placed his piſtol out of the window, and ordered the boy to drive faſt to the neareſt poſt-town. Stanhope's back was to us, and he was ſtill in the keeper's arms when we turned round the hedge that concealed the houſe.

I again preſſed the hand of my deliverer, who thanked God for making him

him the inſtrument of my preſervation, and who ſaid every thing to calm the agitation which I began to feel the more the leſs occaſion I had for the exertion of courage. Perceiving that I trembled exceſſively, and fearing that I ſhould not be able to bear the journey in that ſtate even for a few miles more, Stanley made no ceremony of carrying me to the firſt houſe on the way, and ſeeing a gentleman's ſeat on a hill not very diſtant from the road, he ordered the poſt-boy to drive up to it. I begged him to aſk firſt whereabouts we were. The driver ſaid we were three miles and a half from Thame, and that the houſe on the hill was Mr. Beach's. The ſound of land to a mariner, after a long and perilous voyage, could not be ſweeter to his ear than the name of Beach to mine. I told Stanley we were well acquainted with the family, and deſired that the boy would

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would go immediately to the houſe. I behaved myſelf ſo well as to reach the hoſpitable manſion without fainting, and the attentions paid to me by Mrs. and Miſs Beach ſoon completely reſtored me to myſelf. I related the infamous tranſaction as briefly as I could, which excited the utmoſt indignation in all that heard it; and Mr. Beach and Stanley, attended by ſervants armed, ſet out to ſecure the villain, leaving me under the kind protection of Mrs. Beach.

The circumſtances that attended his being apprehended I ſhall reſign to the pen of our friend Towers, to whom I have read this letter, and who intended to have written the whole account of theſe events to Lord Digby; but having been much engaged on the occaſion, he requeſts you to read this, and alſo the letter he is now writing to you, to his Lordſhip,

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Lordſhip, and to apologize to him for his not writing by this opportunity. I ſhall only add, that Stanhope being taken into cuſtody, the two gentlemen immediately returned to us. Mrs. Beach at firſt wiſhed to detain me for the day, and to ſend a meſſenger to the Elms, but knowing what anxiety it would cauſe there, I reſiſted her friendly propoſal, at the ſame time begging the company of Miſs Beach, which was readily granted. "My protector," ſaid I, looking at Stanley, "will eſcort us to the Elms."— "I was in my way thither," ſaid he. How wonderful! Edward: but I will not encroach on the part I have left for Towers.

We got into the poſt-chaiſe that was to have carried me off, and though we were three, I begged for Triton's company alſo. This he ſeemed to refuſe

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fuse himself by bounding and running off before us. In less than two hours we were at our own door. The danger I had been in never entered the heads of the party, for I had more than once been as long absent at Mrs. Dyer's; but you will easily guess their surprise on seeing me and another lady handed out of a post-chaise by Stanley. I flew into my mother's arms, and bathed her neck with my tears, which alarmed her and distressed our friends. It was some time before I could explain the cause of my emotion, and Stanley, meaning to leave the account to me, only said that I had happily escaped from the hands of a villain. The party could hardly have patience to hear my story, and I never saw my father so enraged before. Our dear Caroline thanked her deliverer for my preservation with as much grace as

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ſhe had formerly thanked him for her own. I was congratulated by the whole party, and Madame de St. Valeri, after looking fixedly at me for ſome time, came acroſs the room and kiſſed me. My father and mother hugged Stanley; the former being aſſured that the ſon of Beelzebub, as he called Stanhope, was ſecured, became pacified, and we ſat down to dinner as happy as the recurring reflexions of your abſence and Charles's ſituation would admit. Heaven bleſs you, my Edward, and reſtore him!

'As to the circumſtances of which I have informed you, I have no doubt that you will command your anger and act with the magnanimity that diſtinguiſhes you on every occaſion; but I fear it may make you anxious to fly to me, therefore keep in mind that I am ſafe at home,

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home, with an additional protector in the brave Stanley, and curtail no comfort that your presence may bestow on your brother. Once more adieu!

JULIA.

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